

COMPARATIVE VIEWS OF
THE CONTROVERSY
BETWEEN THE
CALVINISTS AND THE
ARMINIANS BY WILLIAM
WHITE, D. D.

BISHOP OF THE
PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL
CHURCH IN THE
COMMONWEALTH OF
PENNSYLVANIA.
IN TWO VOLUMES. VOL.
I.

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*District of Pennsylvania, to
wit:*

BE IT REMEMBERED,
that on the fifteenth day of
May, in the forty-first year
of the Independence of the
United States of America A.
D. 1817, The Reverend
Jackson Kemper, the
Reverend James
Montgomery, John Perot,
and Charles Bancker, of the
said district, have
deposited in this office the
title of a book the right
whereof they claim as
proprietors in the words
following, to wit:

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PREFACE

On an appearance of such a work as the present, it seems a tribute of respect due to the publick, to state the motive of the Author. Accordingly, he avows it to be the sustaining of what he conceives to be correct views, in the controversy which is the subject of the volumes. His station in the Episcopal church, and the agency to which circumstances have called him in the conducting of its concerns, may be supposed to have added to other sources of obligation, in

closed, if there had not been, subsequently, the excitement of an extraordinary degree of interest in the discussed subjects, both in England and in the United States of America; and if they had not been treated of, with an especial relation to the Episcopal church: the doctrines of which are here thought to have been in many instances misrepresented. The stating of them in a correct point of view, will of course be a principal object in this work.

The Author, in unfolding

what he understands to be the doctrines of his church, is not without sensibility of the danger to which he exposes himself, of being understood as assailing the institutions of other bodies of professing Christians. This is not his object: But in accomplishing what he declares it to be, there occurs the necessity of incidental reference to principles in contrariety to those sustained.

Although he is not disposed to censure any temperate investigation of religious truth; nor to the taking of occasion for this

even on the authorized standards of their belief, and of their publick administrations. Let it then be noticed, that this is never done, merely for the sake of calling in question the propriety of them. The form of their introduction, is explanatory. Contradicted positions could hardly have been treated with precision, without adverting to the documents, in which they are the most authoritatively established. And the institutions of the church of England, as framed at the reformation, would have

been but imperfectly explained, without reference to other institutions, framed either in opposition, or for the professed purpose of melioration. In short, it is here conceived, that there should be a mutual bearing of different religious societies with one another, in this respect; in regard to liberties taken with candour, and free, alike from misrepresentation and from uncharitableness. How far the Author has, in those respects, submitted to laws laid down by the holy genius of the Christian

There is another description of persons, who may perhaps disapprove of what is here presented. They are those, who, being of the same communion with the Author, may materially dissent from the views taken by him, of the sense of its institutions. It ought to be sufficient in regard to such, that there having been certain differences, for a long course of years, within their common church, there arises from this a motive to mutual forbearance. It would not have been disagreeable to him, to

have continued to esteem the institutions of the church, to be as favorable to a latitude of sentiment here in view, as they once were in his conceptions. He is free to confess, that there was a time, when he thought the articles in particular to have been drawn up, with an accommodation to the opposite opinions treated of in this work. Further inquiry convinced him, that in part he was mistaken; that the reformers of the church of England did indeed accommodate to an opposition of opinion,

existing as early as the fifth century of the Christian church; but that subsequently to the period of the reformation, there arose on one of the sides referred to very important superadditions; which could not have been contemplated in the institutions of the church of England, and to which they are directly in opposition.

There is still another class of people, to whom the Author may be thought answerable, on the question of the propriety of the present measure. They are those who censure

accordingly, it is not the suppressing of this, but the moderating of the manner of conducting it, to which the friends of humanity should direct their efforts. When more is undertaken, it seems a symptom of indifference to all religion; which deceives the possessor of it, under the appearance of the love of peace; as, in the other extreme, furious passion carries with it the imposing pretensions of godly zeal. If the author could perceive anything in what he has written, the tendency of which is to add to the mass

consistent with the continuity of argument. This is the reason of their being attached, as appendices to the several parts, or as a General Appendix to the whole.

ERRATA.

Page 53, 10th line of note for "*Λυτφοιον*" read "*Λυτφη&*"

87, 10th from top. for "any," read "Another."

135, 4th line from top, the word "author's" ought to come in before the first word of the preceding line,
156, 17th line from top, before "much" read

PART 1

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*Respects Nations— And a
Covenant State— But not
implying exclusive
Possession of the Favor of
God.*

EVER since the writer of this, supposed himself possessed of an understanding of the Epistle to the Romans, it has appeared to him an extraordinary fact, that, in the controversy between the Calvinists and the Arminians, the book should be constantly appealed to, on both sides; and, by the former, more than any other book of Scripture;

when, according to the opinion here entertained, the Epistle contains nothing directly to the purpose of the matter at issue between the litigants. To prove this, is the end of the present undertaking. The first satisfactory knowledge of the Epistle which the author received, was from the perusal of the exposition of Mr. Locke. This eminent person was not ashamed to confess, that, after having been long conversant in the Epistles of St. Paul, he made the discovery, that he had not understood the doctrinal

*with “doctrinal:”
correctly affirming, in
this sense, that the Epistle
to the Romans is
“didactick or doctrinal.”]*

but argumentative. Under this remark, however, there are included the first eleven chapters only: so that all beyond them is foreign to the design. The twelfth and thirteenth chapters are a beautiful delineation of Christian morals. The fourteenth is admonition, not without a degree of censure; probably designed to apply to some of those, whose cause St. Paul had

been advocating; although not relatively to the same subject. The fifteenth chapter is partly personal; and partly contains miscellaneous remarks, on the subjects which had gone before. The only remaining chapter is devoted to Christian and friendly salutation; not without a glance, in the conclusion, at the subject which had filled the body of the Epistle; and which seems to have still pressed on the Apostle's mind. But as to the first eleven chapters, they are entirely argumentative: and if so,

common sense and not itself requiring proof, while yet the truth of it is more doubtful than the position which it is brought to prove; is not to impute to him a conduct to be looked for, from such a reasoner. And especially, it should be considered, that he was writing to an infant Church, consisting of two descriptions of persons, neither of whom he had seen; and further, that one division of them were far from viewing what might come from him with a partial eye; while yet these were the very people,

Next, it is to be remarked concerning this argumentative Epistle—the view being still confined to the first eleven chapters—that there is a unity of design in the argument of it; the Apostle laboring to prove, from the Jewish economy, that the Gentiles were to be partakers with the Jews of the benefits of the Christian covenant, without submitting to the ordinances of the Levitical law.

[The Dr. Taylor, mentioned in the

incidentally introduced, there be given interpretations, making them quite foreign to the purpose of the writer, there needs not be any better proof—still keeping in view that the writer is St. Paul—of the incorrectness of such interpretations.

That there is in the Epistle the one design here affirmed, and that it is carried on without reference to other matters, any further than as they contributed to it, must depend for proof on such internal evidence, as, it is hoped, will appear in the

investigation that is to follow. There may be propriety, however, in stating in this place, such evidence as is obvious on the most cursory reading of the Epistle.

That such is the subject, and that such is the one design under which it is conducted, is continually confirmed by the several parts of the composition; the subjects of which, even when apparently wide of the main subject, are not dismissed without an application to it. For every reader may observe, that it is not in this Epistle of St.

another, without any notice of the transition. But in the Epistle to the Romans, from the time that the subject of Gentile communion is introduced, in the sixteenth verse of the first chapter, it is again and again brought up; and not afterwards lost sight of, until the end of the eleventh: nor even altogether then; for there is a short retrospect to it in the twelfth, and again in the fifteenth. What greatly adds to the weight of the present consideration, is the circumstance, that the one design supposed, is the

course of the Apostle's argument?

Of the many commentators who do not support this unity of design, it is here conceived, that the circumstance has an unfavorable effect on their interpretations, however excellent they may have been in other respects. There shall be named two only; one of them Dr. Whitby, reputed an Arminian; the other of them Dr. Doddridge, a Calvinist, although not in the extreme. Dr. Whitby states two great doctrines, as within the

contemplation of the Apostle; one of them, that of justification by faith alone; and the other, the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles. Now, although the former is largely treated of, as may be said of some other subjects; yet, there seems an error in understanding any of them to be treated of in any other point of view, than as aiding to the second point in the statement of Dr. Whitby. And had that learned man considered this as the one point, kept in view always in the Apostle's argument, and

claimed the other points as tributary to it, the circumstance would probably have added to the usefulness of his judicious commentary.

Dr. Doddridge, who is here named with respect, states, as the leading subject of the Apostle, the excellency of the Gospel; which he represents as established by five prominent arguments. That the Epistle, immediately after the introductory salutation and expressions of regard, makes the declaration — “I am not ashamed of the Gospel of

Judaizing Christians, whatever disturbance they had occasioned to their less scrupulous brethren of the Gentiles, would not have admitted the imputation, that they were arraigning the excellency of the Gospel; acknowledged alike by the one party and by the other. Dr. Whitby elevates a subordinate design, to a rank that makes it coordinate with the principal: while Dr. Doddridge not only depresses the principal design from its proper station, and puts another in its stead; but does not even

include the former among the five reasons in his preface, by which the latter is supported: allowing it no further consequence, than that of a posterior discussion in the last three chapters, which have a relation to this, or to any other of the subjects within our view. The difference between the excellency of the Gospel, contemplated in the Epistle, and the same subject, as assumed by Dr. Doddridge, may be illustrated thus. Let it be supposed, that a man were to propose to write a book, the subject of which were to

generally, who disregard it until they reach the eleventh chapter, are obliged to admit it there; although applying it to the very expressions, to which they had denied it in the preceding chapters. The distinction here sustained, may be made the more clear by the following comparison. It has been affirmed, of the French writers and of the English, that the former are the most distinguished by sprightliness, and the latter by solidity of thought. Now, it might be expected of any person, who should engage

seems to affirm of all Jews and of all Gentiles, what the connexion shows to be true of each description of persons, no further than collectively and nationally. Another property of the Epistle, in relation to the collective bodies of men comprehended under the argument of it, is its speaking of their respective privileges, as belonging to a state of covenant with God in this world; and not to a state of reward and punishment hereafter. No doubt, the kingdom of God on earth being instituted with a view to a better

Messiah's spiritual reign on earth, over a people calling on and called by his name. It may not only be remarked under this head, as under the preceding, that the Calvinistick writers, generally, are sure to adopt, in the eleventh chapter, what they had rejected in the chapters preceding; but of Dr. Doddridge in particular, that although he had rejected the other allied principle of national designation, as supported by Mr. Locke; yet, so early as in his interpretation, in the ninth chapter, of the

expressions applied by Calvinists to the conditions in another life of the persons mentioned— such is the candour of the man—he gives some of them the construction here contended for; and avoids, in regard to others, the awful emphasis which his system seems to call for.

The distinction here affirmed, may be elucidated in the following manner. If we were asserting the common right of a coheir, with another coheir, to an interest in a large estate; and if both of them were minors, it would

although it may happen of any present subject of the former, that he shall not reach the latter.

The last particular of the Epistle to be stated, is the implication in it, of a distinction between the state of covenant with God, affirmed under the preceding head; and the exclusive possession of the divine favor, in reference to another life, while that covenant continued; a distinction which will of course apply, under the Christian economy also: that is, neither in the one nor in the other, is

salvation limited to a state of visible covenant. As the passages of the Epistle, on the ground of which the affirmation is here made, will not come under review in the comparison that is to follow, there may be a propriety in offering them in this place.

There are the first two verses of the third chapter, from which the position to be now maintained is an obvious inference. The Apostle had been asserting the admission of the Gentiles within the pale of the Gospel, on equal terms with the Jews. These are

proper subjects of salvation, were it applicable. But no: they had been the chosen people of God, for the accomplishing of a purpose, which runs through the whole series of his dispensations to mankind, from the creation to the consummation of all things. They and all others will be responsible for an improvement of whatever light has been afforded them.

But the passage in the Epistle speaking the most strongly to the point, is in the second chapter, from

the eighth verse to the sixteenth. The Apostle, having denounced the threatening of “indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile,” adds— “But glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.” There is no plausible way of evading the application of this, except by supposing, that the Apostle speaks of the converted Gentiles. But this is inconsistent with the evident tenour of the

passage, taken in connexion with what went before; in which it had been said of the divine Being—“Who will render to every man according to his deeds.” There may, indeed, be taken another course; the supposing that the Apostle speaks of a perfect obedience, not paid by any: but this would be to represent him as speaking to no purpose. By well-doing, he must have meant a good life and conversation, according to the ideas annexed by common use, to the expression. He goes on—

“For there is no respect of persons with God:” that is, say some, no respect to any man, on account of his riches, or of his station, or of any other of the advantages of life; intimating, that the proposition is intended of these subjects only. But this does not consist with the sense, which respects morality of action; and that of men under different dispensations of providence. The words must have the same meaning here, as when used by St. Peter, in the tenth chapter of the Acts;

where this Apostle, after saying— “God is no respecter of persons,” adds— “for in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.”

That the same is the sentiment in the place before us, is evident in what follows— “For as many as have sinned without Law shall also perish without Law; and as many as have sinned in the Law shall be judged by the Law.” There is no reason, why there should be different rules of judgment in the different cases;

unless on a principle, which shall establish different standards of duties respectively required. The thread of the discourse is continued thus— “For not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified.” “The doers of the Law;” meaning in a sense, in which alone such a description of persons could have been introduced; that is, as applying to every upright and religious person under the Law; and not doers in the sense of sinless perfection; there having

hereafter be observed on the passages before and following, that, whereas these are descriptive of national depravity of manners, the intermediate passage speaks of individual character and conduct. So that while heathen communities exhibited evidences of all the enormous crimes displayed in the first chapter; and while the Jewish community was chargeable with consenting to and imitating the heathen practices, which their law condemned, there were, both among the

contemplated controversy, to fix the attention on the leading matter put to issue between the contending parties; bringing in, however, under the third and fourth points, certain subjects which they involve; although not explicitly declared in the points, as usually stated. The subjects here in view, appear to be intimately connected with large portions of the Epistle.

Perhaps it may be expected of him to deliver, under each point, his own opinion of the sense of scripture, in relation to that

department of the controversy. But he is desirous of maintaining, throughout the comparison, the manner which would become a man having no bias, either to Calvinism, or to Arminianism; nor yet, any opinion of his own, on the subject generally; or who, on the other hand, might belong to either of the two parties; yet conceive of his own cause, that it would be injured, as indeed every good cause must, by arguments which do not apply. This line of conduct, however, dictates the

1. OF PREDESTINATION.

The Question stated—Sense of Chapter 8 verse 29, to end of chapter 9—Of chapter 10 and 11—Connexion of the whole with chapter 12, verse 1.

THERE is no need to say much, in statement of the hinge on which the controversy turns, in relation to this first point of it. The disputants consent in the acknowledging of a predestinating of some to life, while all others are

passed over, say some Calvinists; but, say other Calvinists, the reprobation of those not ordained to life is also directly an object of the decree. The difference between both these descriptions of Calvinists and the Arminians consists in this; that the latter found the decree of God in favor of the elect, on his foreknowledge of their faith and obedience; while the former make it independent on that circumstance. There does not appear anything immediately applicable, until we reach the 29th and

30th verses of the 8th chapter, in which we read as follows:

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

Nothing will be here said

concerning the meaning of the word “called,” because it will come more properly in another place. When we take up the words, “foreknow,” and “predestinate,” they seem to give a great advantage to the Arminians, in relation to the distinction on which their whole doctrine of predestination rests. And indeed, if the Apostle could be properly considered as speaking principally of individual character, and principally in relation to another life, the authority would seem decisive.

[Two grounds are taken, in order to avoid the effect of there being given the first place to foreknowledge, and the second to predestination, in an enumeration of the divine acts according to the intended order. It is remarked, first, that the expression is simply, “whom he did foreknow,” without any mention of their faith and their obedience; and secondly, that the Greek word, “[GREEK WORD]” often signifies foreknowing with affection; which is proved by other passages of

But, according to the principle of interpretation here supported, nothing was further from his thoughts. The spirit of the sentiment seems to be, that, in contrariety to the opinion of there being no admission to a state of covenant with God, except agreeably to the institutions of the law, he had, before the giving of the law, declared his purpose of extending the covenant to the Gentiles; as had been shown in a preceding part of the Epistle: that accordingly, there was a

foreknowledge and a predestination of Gentile converts, disengaged from rituals, which had not been ordained, until after the declaration of the said purpose and decree; that not only so, there had been a call given by the ministry of the word; and a compliance with the call, on the part of the then Gentile professors; and that, in addition still—for the Apostle should be considered as now going on, from the matter in dispute, to an undisputed fact—they who were called had been justified, or

authoritatively declared righteous in the sight of God; and glorified, by a portion of the Spirit of Glory's resting on them; these two particulars having been demonstrated, by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The difference between justification and glorification, as demonstrated, each of them by miracle, seems to be, that the former relates to the acceptance of persons; and the latter, to the qualifying of some of them to work miracles themselves. Such use of the

word makes the passage analogous to many other places of scripture; one of which is, where it is said:

“How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?”

[2 Cor. 3:8] —The Apostle could not have intended the glory hereafter, because he spoke of the past; and it is difficult to devise any meaning, besides that here ascribed to the expression. The reference supposed gives evident pertinency to the inference, that the

Gentiles, as such, were
owned to be a people
admissible to the covenant:
And the passage, placed in
this point of view, is
analogous to St. Peter's use
of the same argument, in
the 8th verse of the 15th
chapter of the Acts; where
he says—

**“God, who knoweth the
hearts, bare them witness,
giving them the Holy Ghost,
even as he did unto us.”**

And what he understood,
by giving them the Holy
Ghost, is evident in the

“He, therefore, that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?”

[Chap. 3:5] That there had been, at the early period when the Apostle wrote to the converts in the capital of the empire, the same grace bestowed on them, is not only in itself highly probable, but seems referred to in several places of the Epistle. The first, worthy of notice, is in the

5th verse of the 5th chapter; where it is said—

“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

—The original word being expressive, elsewhere, of the pouring out of the extraordinary gifts, it is a circumstance, which favors the opinion of a reference to the subject here. The Apostle, indeed, denotes a manifestation to the hearts of the believers; and the having of a view to this is

only one of them. It is:

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”

[Verse 16]

It is not the same with a witnessing “*to* our spirit;” as some delight to consider it, because of the support which it then seems to give to a favorite fancy; but “*with* our spirit.” There are therefore two witnesses; one inward, which can be no other than the consciousness of a holy

conformity to the divine will ; and the other outward, which must have been the sensible effusion of the Holy Ghost, who is still a witness at the present day, in the testimony of the word, and in no other way.

The matter is again implied in the 6th verse of the 12th chapter— “Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.” Commentators consider this, as significant of extraordinary

endowments; although an application of the same to ordinary edification is the principal subject of the lesson given. The word “gifts,” throughout the writings of St. Paul, is descriptive of what comes front the miraculous interposition of the Holy Ghost ; standing thus distinguished from “the fruits of the Spirit which are the gracious endowments of the mind, or its moral habits. And there is probably another reference to the same effusion, in the 13th verse of the 15th chapter, where

it is said —

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

For although “hope” is one of “the fruits of the Spirit,” agreeably to the distinction already taken; yet it is not probable, that the Apostle would have made such an allusion to its source, if the Romans could have said at this period, what had been said by

certain men in Ephesus, at a much earlier period—We have not so much as heard, whether there be any Holy Ghost.”

On the ground of these authorities, there is rested the presumption, that there had been a miraculous effusion on some persons in the Roman Church; that there being among the persons so favored, some, of the Gentile side of the question, there is inferred the impropriety of considering any as inadmissible to a participation of ordinary privileges, without a

with the dignity of the Apostleship, but with his personal character and accomplishments.

Besides; all that follows to the end of the chapter is in agreement with the interpretation given; while it shows no pertinency to any other sense. For the Apostle, strong in the reasonings which had run through several preceding chapters and bringing them to a point, applies them thus:

“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for

“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not, with him, also freely give us all things?”

[Verse 32]

Here the Apostle, transported by his subject, combines it with the beneficent tendency of the Gospel generally. They against whom he wrote did not deny, that Gentiles might be admitted to Christian communion, although they contended, that it should be through

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

[Verse 33]

Chosen as we have been, under the publick evidence of a divine designation, what mortal shall presume to accuse us, on the account of our not conforming to what they erroneously imagine essential to the profession of his name?

"It is God that justifieth:"

[Verse 33]

"Who is he that

condemneth?” [Verse
34]

It is the sovereign Judge, who has signified the acceptance of our persons, by tokens evident to sense: who then shall oppose his prerogative by the opposite judicial sentence of our condemnation?

“It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

Christian communion and the condition of uncircumcised professors of the faith, to another description of persons, meaning the common persecutors of them both: And then he enumerates the variety of trials, to which men were at that time exposed, by the profession of Christianity. There is no need to comment on the affecting passage, because, although it will come in properly under another department of the present work, it is not to the purpose in this place, any further than as a

difficulties arose from the prejudice here contested, the opinion which the Jews entertained of the perpetual obligation of their law: the persecutions heretofore sustained having been brought on, principally, by the instigations of that people, and not, as afterwards, by heathen persecutors.

It would be rash to affirm, that a correct judgment has been expressed in every particular, as to the sense of the preceding passage. But there can hardly be an error in believing, that the Apostle, through the whole,

was a plan which could not have been adopted by such a writer as St. Paul.

The whole subject of this work was entered on with awe; on account of the variety of opinion, which has prevailed on it. But there is felt an increased measure of that affection, on passing to the 9th chapter of the Epistle; which has puzzled so many men, much abler than the present writer; and, what is far more to be deplored, has been, the occasion of dejection and of despair to many: this, as is here thought, in consequence of

interpretations which have no foundation in the passage. It is not the design to notice the various senses, which have been ascribed to the different verses in the chapter. Far from this, there will not be reviewed or reconsidered, to any considerable extent, what the author has heretofore taken the trouble to peruse; of the much greater proportion of which, he judges it better to be ignorant than to be informed.

The interpretation of part of the 8th chapter, makes a clear connexion of it with

as from among the Gentiles. But let the view be confined to national character and designation; and then, all is pertinent—all is sound argument.

The Apostle begins with a declaration, exciting the expectation of some afflicting truth to be disclosed. For, after professing his own sincerity in this solemn form—

“I say the truth in Christ; I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the

Holy Ghost”

[Verse 1]

— he adds—

“That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.”

[Verse 2]

The cause of this great heaviness and continual sorrow was confessedly the rejection of the Jews, declared soon afterwards. Here was great cause, it must be confessed; although in the estimation of a mind susceptible of

sympathy, nothing in comparison of the more dreadful and extensive reprobation, which it has been thought the object of this very chapter to affirm. Still, all for whom the Apostle feels in this place, are his countrymen, the Jews. The passage, although partly given in the introduction, is here repeated at full length for the connexion:

“For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the

flesh: who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the Fathers; and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came; who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.”

[Verses 3, 4, 5]

There have been many ways thought of, to soften the harshness of this wish. The tense of the Greek verb admits the translation — I could have wished:

salvation under the Gospel. The question is of the description of persons, capable of being within its bounds.

As the connexion points out this distinction, so it is further conspicuous in the terms in which the cases are brought before us, when compared with their correlative places in the Old Testament. For whereas it is stated, that there had been given to Abraham

“the word of promise, At this time will I come, and

Sara shall have a son;”

[Verse 9]

the same promised son is declared, by the Apostle, to have been preferred to Ishmael, another son of Abraham—preferred to him, says the Calvinistick system, as an heir of immortality. Now let it be remembered, that the Apostle is framing his argument, to the apprehension of persons acquainted with the Old Testament and believing in its divine authority; and further, that he bestows no

**“Oh that Ishmael might live
before thee!”**

God answers, that,
although Abraham should
have another and more
favored son, yet, in regard
to Ishmael, it should be as
had been desired. Oh
faithful Abraham! little
didst thou imagine, when
thou receivedst this
promise, from him who
knew thou wouldst

**“command thy children
after thee,”**

that, in the

“being not yet born,
neither having done any
good or evil, that the
purpose of God, according
to election, might stand,
not of works, but of him
that calleth;” it was
said—“the elder shall
serve the younger;”
[Verses 11, 12]

And

“Jacob have I loved, but
Esau have I hated,”
[Verse 13]

or esteemed him less.

prophet Malachi; where he introduces the Most High speaking thus—

“I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau; and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.”

[1, 2, 3.]

And to show further, how foreign this is from the use made of it by some, it refers to the fortunes, not of the persons, but of their posterities. For when did Esau serve his brother Jacob?

Or what evidence is there, of the wasting of the heritage of the former, in his own day? Everything recorded of the brothers has a contrary appearance; especially their interview described in the 33d chapter of Genesis, and the account given in the 36th chapter, of the splendour of Esau's progeny, just before the mention of the incidents in the family of Jacob, which ended in his retreat to Egypt, where he lived and died dependent. The construction thus given to the 12th verse of the 9th chapter of the

Calvinistick, and in contrariety to the Arminian scheme. For he grounds the fortunes of the brothers, not on their faith and their works foreseen, but on sovereign will. The advocates of the latter system seem to have no way of getting over the difficulty, but by the help of the truth here sustained, that individual character and everlasting life are not the direct object of the argument. Indeed, if they be, the authority of this passage extends further than is consistent with the Calvinistick doctrine, and

“What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?”

answering his own question tho —

“God forbid!”

[Verse 14]

It is here evident, that he so far treats the question with respect, as to imply, that the mind of man may lawfully inquire, concerning a mode of proceeding ascribed to God, whether it be

these sentiments is to be drawn from the 15th verse of the chapter, where the Almighty is quoted, saying, in *Exod. 33:19* —

“I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.”

As the English word “mercy” is so much used in connexion with the forgiveness of sin, it is probable, that even this circumstance may have sometimes contributed to

“So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.”

[Verse 16]

This still refers to the relative circumstances of the brothers, particularly, to the elder's running in quest of the venison; and his eagerly coveting of the blessing, though in vain.

Next, is the case of Pharaoh, concerning whom it is said, by the Sovereign of the whole earth—

“Even for this same

purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee; and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.”

[Verse 17]

To make it of any use to the Calvinistick scheme, it should have been—

“For this purpose I have brought thee into being.”

But no; Pharaoh may be supposed to have been found with a mind regardless of the power of God, before he was raised

up, for the end stated. Neither is the expression, “raised thee up,” exactly expressive of the words in Genesis; which signify, agreeably to the translation in the margin, “made thee stand up.” [*Exod. 9:16*] Under this construction, which is supported by the translation of the Septuagint, the sentiment is to this effect—

“I might have cut thee off with thy subjects, in my judgments already inflicted before thine eyes; but I have sustained thee and

made thee stable in thy kingdom, for a heavier judgment still to come.”

For although the Apostle uses a word, alike pertinent, indeed, to his own purpose, yet varying in sense from the Hebrew, he cannot reasonably be supposed to have designed this, in order to give countenance to an hypothesis, not warranted by the original text. Now, that by the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, the name of God was glorified in the

Israelitish nation, is evident in sacred history. And that it was also glorified in the neighbouring nations, may easily be believed; although no record of it is to be found, in the, work of the Father of profane history, Herodotus; who had but little transmitted to him, of transactions so early as those of the period here referred to. But, that the name of God had been glorified in the earth, by the eternal damnation of this wicked prince, does not appear; and especially, it cannot be imagined that

narrative implies, this wicked prince, hitherto untouched by calamities which did not affect his person, and beholding his unhappy end inevitable and near, did not lift up his once **stubborn** heart, now subdued and softened, in accepted penitence, to the Lord of life and death? Be this as improbable as it may, it must be confessed possible; which excludes all interpretation of St Paul's reasonings, as if grounded on the acknowledged event of his damnation. And if so, there can be no consequence unfavorable

to our system, in what is added—

“Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth:” [*Verse 18*]

this hardening being in agreement with other places of scripture, in which there is ascribed to God that which has its origin in the wickedness of men, and which he permits, with a view of overruling it to a subserviency of his designs. And that no more is here meant, we find

may God find fault with the wickedness of men, even under the punishments inflicted on its account. But the question seems introduced, in peevish discontent at the doctrine, in which, as must have been perceived, the Apostle's argument would end—the rejection of the Jews, from the privilege of being a peculiar people. With evident propriety, therefore, the Apostle turns on the opponent, [*Verses 20,21*] with a counter expostulation, as to the replying against God, and the questioning of the

prerogatives of his government, for the having made this people or the other people what they are; as if the clay should deny the right of the potter, “to make one lump to honour and another to dishonour.” This similitude is taken from the 6th verse of the 18th chapter of Jeremiah, by which we ought of course to be governed, in the interpretation of it. It is there distinctly applied to the speaking “concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to destroy;” and “concerning a nation and

For, after applying the metaphor of “vessels of mercy,” by declaring them to be—

“even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles;”

[Verse 24]

he goes on to recite the prediction of this call by Hosea, where it is said—

“I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.”

“And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.”

[Verses 25, 26]

So much, for “the vessels of mercy,” as a people. And then, showing that “the vessels of wrath” were designated such, as a people also, the Apostle goes on to quote Isaiah predicting the rejection of the Jews—Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the

of the laws. This is one part of his conclusion. The other is, that “Israel,” considered also as a people,—since otherwise, the affirmation concerning them was not strictly true, there being a considerable number of the nation to whom it did not apply—that “Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness;” [*Verse 31*] being kept back from it by their attachment to the abrogated ordinances of their law; the object of which had ceased, not as destroyed, but as fulfilled

epistle is applied by Calvinism. There are also explicitly announced a “casting away” and a breaking off; [*Verses 15, 17*] yet connected with a grafting in again. [*Verse 23*] Now as these expressions, in the eleventh chapter, have a retrospective view to “the vessels of wrath” spoken of in the ninth; nothing but the supposition of the entire change of subject and of style can prevent a direct hostility of the expressions, against the Calvinistick scheme. There is a still greater difficulty in

interpretation here
opposed, it might be
supplied by the strains in
which the Apostle, after the
conclusion of his argument,
gives vent to the feelings of
his heart. His argument
had begun early in the 1st
chapter, and closes towards
the ending of the 11th. Then
looking back, as would
seem, on the whole ground
gone over, he breaks out in
effusions, which could no
otherwise have been
prompted, than by a glow
of admiration of the infinite
excellence of the divine
Being, which had been
displayed; and closes, with

the ascribing of due praise
and glory to his great
name:

“O the depth of the
riches, both of the wisdom
and the knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are his
judgments, and his ways
past finding out! For who
hath known the mind of the
Lord? Or who hath been
his counsellor? Or who
hath first given to him, and
it shall be recompensed
unto him again? For of him,
and through him, and to
him, are all things: To
whom be glory forever.

Amen.”

[Verse 33]

Had the epistle consisted of such a series of subjects as Calvinism supposes, a writer disclosing them to the world under the influence of inspiration, might fitly bow in submission, under a sense of the fearful sovereignty, illustrating its glory in the damnation of millions of intelligent creatures, appointed to them before their being called into existence, and without any undeservings of their own,

*short of Deism, or even
Atheism, or rather
universal scepticism !”
Life prefixed to the
Treatise on religious
Affections.]*

It was intimated, in the beginning of this work, that the subject of it ended with the 11th chapter. There will be no impropriety, however, in casting our eyes forward to its connexion with the chapter succeeding, which begins thus:

“I beseech you therefore,

brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

Had the Apostle been laying down a scheme of general and eternal condemnation, from which a very few only had been rescued, by a predestinating decree, it being at the same time impossible to affirm, concerning the persons to whom the epistle is addressed, that they were

Apostle might fitly apply the persuasive motive of the mercies of God, as an incitement to the sublime morality which was to follow.

2. OF REDEMPTION.

The Question stated—Nothing to the purpose of the Controversy —The Sense of the Latter part of Chapter 5th.

THE difference between the Calvinists and the Arminians, on this point,

may be stated in few words. The former believe, that Christ died for those only who are predestinated, agreeably to what they affirm under the preceding point; and that salvation is not possible to others; although offered to them, in order to constitute a ground on which they may be at last condemned. The Arminians believe, that the satisfaction of Christ was for all mankind, and for every one of them in particular; although none reap the benefit, but those who believe and obey the Gospel.

the 5th chapter. In that passage, both Mr. Locke and Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, make the word “many,” the same with “all,” and the word “all,” in the place where it is used, to be intended universally. Not so Dr. Whitby, or Mr. Limborch, both of whom consider the sense of the place, as confining the terms to believers. The writer of this considers the passage as implying, that the effects of Christ’s death are coextensive with those of Adam’s sin. Nevertheless, the universality of the

3. OF FREE WILL

The Meaning of the term, as understood by both parties, who had no difference concerning it—There arises the Question of Original Sin, on which they differ—The Points of difference—Sense of Chapter 3, Verse 3—Sense of Chapter 8, Verse 7, in connexion with Chapter 7, from Verse 7—Interpretation before Austin—And by him.

[It has been remarked

propriety of the word, the controversy turns on the question of power in the will, called by the Latins “*liberum arbitrium*,” but by the Greeks “[GREEK WORD]” and “[GREEK WORD].” It has also been called in Latins “*ipsietas*” Whenever there may be used the words “free will,” in the present work, it must be understood in compliance with custom; and to mean the same with what has been commonly intended to be expressed by the aforesaid Latin and Greek words.

whatever ability for the keeping of the law of the Creator man had been originally clothed, he had become divested of it by the fall: so that his recovery cannot be either begun or perfected, otherwise than under the influence of divine aid.

Although this was always presented, by the Arminians, as one of their points, both before and at the Synod which decided on their cause; yet it does not appear to have made a part of their early controversy. So far as it goes, there was nothing

against which the Calvinists could object. For the Arminians, however they may have differed from them as to the extent of the consequences of the fall, have agreed with them in this, that nothing but a new act of grace and new aid founded on it; can restore to the forfeited life and immortality.

But if we extend our view to the writings of the Arminians generally, we find in them sentiments utterly inconsistent with those maintained by the Calvinists, in relation to the apostasy.

The difference between the parties, will be seen by a statement of what the latter superadd to the mortality, to the depraved nature, and to the utter inability acknowledged by the former.

The Calvinists consider the sin of Adam, as made that of all mankind by imputation; so that they are all, on this account, obnoxious to eternal misery; from which a determinate number is rescued, by a predestinating decree. It is however acknowledged, that God cannot condemn

one side or the other right; or be the right of either in whole or in part; there is nothing in the epistle to the Romans, relative to any branch of the subject on which the parties are divided. The writer of the epistle, it is here contended, was intent on another subject, which very much interested his mind and the minds of those for whom he wrote. He does, indeed, make a short digression, to the mortality incurred through Adam; but for what purpose? The answer is:—Because of its being a fit medium for the

proof of the position, that since the said mortality affected Jew and Gentile alike, it was a ground from which to infer, that the counteracting efficacy of the death of Christ extended to them both. St. Paul has also, in this epistle, referred to a taint of nature. But again let it be asked: For what purpose? Again it must be answered—Not with a reference to the present point, as though the writer were making it the theme of his argument; but because it fell in with the purpose which he had in

view. This was the showing of the insufficiency of an instituted law, to the effect of justification: of a law, which far from restraining our bad propensities, made their sinful nature more conspicuous than before.

But, to go on to the passages which have been thought applicable: The first passage to be here mentioned, is chapter 3:9. But it is to be taken as explaining and to be explained by the greater part of the first and second chapters, and a passage following it in the third. The Apostle having, in the

the subject of this discourse. Why? “Because we have before charged [1:25] both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.”

Let us attend, then, to this charge; and first, as laid against the Gentiles. The Apostle, after having stated that they had “changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator,” goes on thus—“For this cause” (that is, as an effect of this cause, and not as a necessity of nature laid on them) “God gave them up unto vile

them.” *[verse 26]*

So stands the charge, as it affected the Gentiles: And the Apostle, immediately after urging it on them, turns to the Jews, and addressing the nation, through the medium of an individual character supposed, he says—

“Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself: for thou that judgest doest the same things.”

[Verse 1]

After amplifying and illustrating this sentiment, he goes on thus—

“Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge

and of the truth in the law. Thou, therefore, which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?"

[Verse 17—23]

Thus stands the charge

charged; none but actual sins, and those of a very high grade, being found in the catalogue. But further, it is beyond belief, that the Apostle should have designed to charge all adult Jews and all adult Gentiles, with having been guilty of the very bad conduct, truly affirmed to be prevailing among, and tolerated by, their several communities. In regard to the heathen, the grammatical construction fixes every article of the charge on all and every one of them, if considered otherwise than in their collective

“Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God, until this day.”

But the black catalogue of crimes will receive its proper application, if we keep in view the end of the Apostle's argument, and not otherwise. The question concerned admission to the gospel covenant. The converted Gentiles did not set up a claim to it, on any other ground than that of mere favor. And therefore, there

verses of the second chapter, where he says—

“He is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is One inwardly; whose circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

These words must have some meaning. They cannot, then, be designed of such a character, as neither did nor could exist;

been said concerning the same nation, by the Psalmist in his day —

“There is none righteous, no not one, there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips. Whose mouth is full of cursing and

bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

[Verse 10, 18]

These words, indeed, taken without regard to the connexion and the design of them, are indiscriminate. But we know, that in a quotation, there is more regard had to the sense and the spirit of the passage quoted, than to the pertinency of every

expression. Now, the words are from the 14th psalm, in which they are descriptive of prevalent and triumphant wickedness, indeed, but not of such as was universal: For the Psalmist immediately adds, concerning the workers of wickedness described—

“Who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord.”

He goes on to speak of

“the generation of the righteous;”

in whose behalf he puts up the devout wish:

“Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!”

The Apostle’s quoting of the gloomy description above recited, is as if he had said—

“What the Psalmist has recorded of the prevalent wickedness of his day, I apply to ours.”

And the end of his

which he had quoted from the Psalmist—

“Now we know, that what things soever the law saith”

(meaning here, by the law, the whole body of Jewish scripture)

“it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth maybe stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”

Guilty, more or less, they

doubtless all are in his holy presence, and as such, “subject to his judgments,” as the margin of the Bible more literally translates. But the Jew claimed exemption, in virtue of the covenant. No; says the Apostle, it has no virtue, as to that effect; and therefore the new dispensation contemplates all the world, that is, both Jews and Gentiles, as on a level in regard to pretence of merit. The next passage to be noticed, is the much litigated one, and confessedly the most difficult in the whole

Apostle, [*verse 12*] “as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin.” What is the death here spoken of? A spiritual death, say some; consisting in an utter insensibility to good. Be there such a death or not, it is a pity, from zeal for the establishing of it, to spoil the Apostle’s reasoning in this place. The death within his view was a known dispensation, passing before the eyes of all; and not to be involved in metaphysical disquisition. “And so death passed upon all men, for that” (or in whom, meaning

Adam) “all have sinned.” Here may be thought to open on us the doctrine of federal headship; since we are said to have all sinned in Adam. But it is frequent with St. Paul, to put the cause for the effect; and he ought to be understood as doing so in this place; because it else contradicts the sentiment with which the passage teems, that of the loss of immortality by Adam’s sin, and not our own. The words can mean no more, than that in him all men became subject to the consequences of sin: And this makes the

expression in question analogous to what is said 1 Kings 1:21.

“I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders” —literally “be sinners;” besides other instances of the same phraseology in the Old Testament. [*verse 13*]

“For until the law,” that is, during the ages which were before it, “sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law.”

They who confine St. Paul’s sense always to the letter, would do well to consider, how far, on that

come.” This he does; but although there must, of course, be a resemblance between the antitype and the type; yet he contends, that what is true of the one is more eminently so of the other.

Here comes in the most difficult part of the passage: and the difficulty consists, in determining precisely the points of the dissimilitude affirmed. There shall be given three interpretations; each of them supported by a great name: But as no one of them is entirely satisfactory to the writer of these

remarks, he will take the liberty—which he trusts is not presumptuous, when the inquiry is concerning truth—to offer an interpretation of his own.

The first to be named, is that of Dr. Whitby. He thinks, that they who had sinned in their own persons may be said to have died on that account; for instance, those Antediluvians, who were swept away by the flood. On this ground, it is supposed that a deduction being made of all who had sinned in person, the remainder are not so many as those made alive by

Christ: in which circumstance consisted the greater abounding of the gift, beyond the punishment. But this does not seem to answer the purpose, since they who sinned and died would have died, if they had never sinned, agreeably to what St. Paul says in another place—

“In Adam, all die.”

[1 Cor. 15:22]

Accordingly, this sense of Dr. Whitby is objected to by Mr. Locke, who offers another, to the following

be spoken with due deference to so eminent a person—in the unsuitableness of the comparison drawn between the appetite of Adam, and the benevolence of Christ. In order to square the construction with the argument, it seems needful, that the things compared should not be in entire opposition to one another; but as to the matter in hand, alike: although one of them is to be supereminent over the other.

The third opinion is that of Dr. Taylor, which lays

found it difficult to have shown, wherein the benefit obtained by the death of Christ went beyond the regaining of what was lost through Adam. For although many and precious are the fruits of the former, in the gifts and the aids of the holy Spirit; yet they are all no more, than was necessary for the object to be accomplished. And besides, the supposed surplusage was at any rate—although great stress is supposed to be laid on it—foreign to the Apostle's argument; which is best satisfied by a strict analogy.

With diffidence, another interpretation is here proposed The idea which will govern in it is, that although the passage is confessedly a digression, yet the Apostle does not digress to such a length, as to lose sight of the point which he had been laboring, and which it was his purpose to resume. There are two criticisms to be here made on the original. Mr. Locke translates “the many:” And conformably to such a translation it will be found, that, although the article is seldom joined in the New

may now go on with the passage. “But,” says the Apostle, “not as the offence, so also is the free gift” [*Verse 15*] —free alike to Jew and Gentile, without the condition of the burthensome institutions of the Levitical law.

“For if through the offence of one, the many”—that is, as well they who had sinned against a law denouncing death, as they who had no law to which that precise penalty was annexed; or in other words, both Jews and Gentiles—“be dead;” that is, obnoxious to the event

his dispensation of mercy, that “the free gift is of many offences” (if they had been committed) “unto justification.” He goes on “For if by one offence” (as the margin properly has it) “death reigned by one; much rather” may it be, considering God’s overflowing mercy in the gospel, that “they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.”

[Verse 17] In both of the last preceding verses, there is here contemplated a reference to the Jewish

prejudices opposed. And it seems an argument in point, that if, as was admitted, all descriptions of men had lost their immortality by another's fault, it might well be believed, concerning a dispensation so beneficent as that of the Gospel, that all descriptions of men might receive under it the fruits of the merits of another—freely: for this is the circumstance, on which the stress is laid, or without the prerequisite of legal initiation and the subsequent burthen of legal works.

his first choice of words.

To go on then with the passage: “Therefore,” adds the Apostle, “as by one offence, judgment came upon all men”—Jew and Gentile—to condemnation; even so, by one righteousness;” that is, one act of it, “the free gift came upon all men,” of the same variety of character, “unto justification of life.” Then, the Apostle seems desirous of expressing the same truth in varied language, for the greater clearness. “For,” says he, “as by one man’s *[v19]* disobedience, the many ”(Jews and

Gentiles) “were made” (or constituted) “sinners;” that is, subjected to the consequences of another’s sin, “so, by the obedience of one, shall [the same] many be made righteous;” that is, not formally so, but as partaking of the blessed effects of his meritorious death. To those not attentive to the peculiarities of St. Paul’s writing, it may seem a straining of this verse, to make “sinners” another expression for the being made subject to the consequences of sin. But let those who may be disposed

to object to it be aware, not only of the pertinency of it to the argument; but of the consequence of insisting on the strict meaning of the word: which will be, that, as all sinned in Adam, without any subsequent consenting to it; so, all are released from the penalties of sin, by being made righteous in Christ, in virtue of his obedience, without any subsequent act, not to say of obedience of their own, but also of faith.

There has been given, it is trusted, the sense of this much litigated passage. If it

should not be accurate in every particular, it may be sufficiently so, for the purpose of the writer. On the ground of the interpretation, the Arminians can draw nothing from it, in favor of their system. For, although there may seem something to this effect, in what is said of “all being made righteous;” and of the free gift to “the many,” interpreted by respectable authority to be the same with “all;” yet, if these expressions are so positively applied, as is here affirmed, to different

descriptions of collective bodies, little stress is to be laid on the use of them. What should further discourage all application of this sort, is the absolute nakedness of the epistle, as to any evidence of there having been, in the mind of the Apostle, an inquiry into the extent of the offer of salvation, as the subject respected individuals, involving the question of few or many. No, the general argument of it applies “all” and “the many” to the Gentiles, contemplated in combination with the Jews

under a spiritual death, including an entire depravation of nature and subjection to everlasting punishment; so, at least an opportunity of attaining to salvation has been bestowed on all; if not rather, that it shall certainly be enjoyed by all: neither of which would be admitted by him, who subjects himself to such a consequence.

We proceed to another passage, weighty in meaning. It ought to be so, indeed, in the estimation of all; but it is set up by one of the parties in view, as the

each individual knows of himself and observes of others.

The text intended is in the 7th verse of the 8th chapter, where we read—

“The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”

What is the carnal mind? Doubtless, inordinate desire, expressed in the original by words which, literally translated, are “the mind of the flesh.” There is a personification of the latter word; and to the figurative person thus

verse of the preceding chapter; from which there is a continuation of kindred sentiment, to the verse before us.

The Apostle, through the whole, opposes the purity of the law to inbred sin; by reason of which, the law, though “ordained to life,” *[v10]* was “found to be unto death,” by the condemning effect of the penalty annexed to it. He here uses some very strong expressions, as his manner sometimes is, and not in their most obvious senses. Thus he speaks of sin working in him all manner

opposition of opinion, among commentators and other writers; some ascribing the struggle which the first part of the passage describes, to the stranger to gospel grace; and others to the man subjected to its influence. On the opposite sides of the question, there shall be here mentioned two men, who may be supposed nearly equal in the greatness of their talents—Mr. Locke and Dr. Samuel Clarke. Had the writer of this been left to his own understanding only, he should have

supposed it impossible to have entertained any other opinion, than that of the passage being designed of the sinner; partly, because the violence of the struggle seems little consistent with that subjection of passion, which must, in a considerable degree at least, adorn the character of the Saint; and further, because, in the conclusion, there is celebrated a triumph, as the effect of grace, in the struggle which had been described. Dr. Clarke is of the opinion, which has been here expressed. He supposes,

After several remarks, opening this sentiment more distinctly, the passage goes on to describe the conflict between inordinate desire and the commandment set in opposition to it.—

“That which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good. Now then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, that is in

my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God, after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and

bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.”

[v15-23]

The Apostle had thus discoursed of man, first in his natural state; and then, as a subject of the Mosaick dispensation. After this, he discourses of a conflict, as belonging to both these states, but applied especially to the latter, which was more immediately connected with his design. Here we perceive two principles; on one hand, a principle

“I see and approve of the better, but pursue the worse.”

What establishes the interpretation here given of the passage, as applying to the natural and not to the Christian man, is, that the Apostle, after having described the conflicting principles in the breast of the personated character, makes him exclaim, under a sense of the misery of his estate—

“O wretched man that I

am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

[v24]

then making him answer his own question, under the disclosure of gospel grace, supposed just then to open on him—"I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." *[v25]* The Apostle, returning to his former point, sums up what he had said concerning it, thus—"So then with the mind, I myself, this man, who has been described, "serve the law of God; but

captivity, which had been groaned under before. It is one of the instances of the candour of Dr. Doddridge, that he releases this important passage from the claims of Calvinism: expressing himself concerning it, in a note, as follows—"I should not have known sin,' &c. "The Apostle here, by a very dexterous turn, changes the person, and speaks as of himself. This he elsewhere does, [*Rom. 3:6, 1 Cor. 10:30, 4:6*] when he is only personating another character. And the character assumed here, is

discourse, as well as to what is expressly asserted ch. 8:2.”

The effect which the foregoing passage has on the text more immediately proposed to be commented on, must be obvious. When it is said—“The carnal mind,” or, according to the more strict translation, “The mind of the flesh is enmity against God;” the proposition cannot possibly be designed of a settled enmity against the Divine Being; but it relates to the lower principle, comprehended under the preceding delineation of

human nature. That principle is, in itself, a necessary part of our present being: but when it breaks loose from its proper subjection to the law of God, it is then contemplated, as in hostility to him. The person thus under its misrule, is then “carnally minded.” And to be thus minded is “enmity against God:” or, as it is said in the next verse—“they that are in the flesh”—that is, sunk in its sensualities, so as to be detached from the pursuit of spiritual good—“cannot please God.” They are in

the breast of an Apostle; in which also, the latter is triumphant and the former born down under it. But all that will follow is, that the conflict must be still more severe, in the heart that is a stranger to the ascendancy of gospel grace. If, in such a heart, there cannot be any good thought or any good desire, it must be proved by some other medium, than that before us: and this is all that has been pledged to be proved, concerning it.

The interpretation which has been given of the passage, agrees perfectly with the design of the

scripture; such as—“they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts;” with many things to the same effect.

There is a striking fact of early times, showing how much the passage in question has been seen to stand in the way of the doctrine now called Calvinistick. Before the time of St. Austin, it had been generally interpreted—among others by Tertullian, Origen, and Chrysostom—of man first in his natural state, then under the law, and lastly

which has been given of the interference of the passage with the Calvinistick scheme, may be considered as passing it to the credit of the Arminian. There is, however, a circumstance unfavorable to this sentiment. The Apostle, where he describes the struggle, makes it between nature and a sense of sin under the law; on which account, it may perhaps be said, that the same thing is not to be predicated of nature simply, on the authority of this passage. For this reason, although the author considers it as

4. OF GRACE.

*The Question stated—
Nothing relative— Some
Passages, which may be
thought to apply—
Relation of the Subject to
the Question concerning
good Works— Fourth
Chapter, with resulting
Considerations.*

THE Calvinists and the
Arminians agree in
affirming, that the
disorders of our nature can
be healed only by the grace
of God, which begins, and
brings to perfection,

whatever is holy and acceptable to God, in man. But the Calvinists say, that saving grace is given only to the elect; in whom it is irresistible and efficacious. The Arminians hold, that grace is bestowed on all; that it is sufficient for their salvation; but that it acts suavisely, and may be resisted.

The principal question, then, is that of resistible or irresistible influence of the Holy Ghost, in conversion. Now, the epistle does not contain any thing which has ever been alleged to be a direct affirmation,

concerning his holy influence, in that business. We are, indeed, told of “the spirit’s helping our infirmities,” and of his “making intercession for us.” And it is not denied to be reasonable to argue analogically, that he must exercise an agency over the mind, in the matter now the subject. But, as even this is not directly affirmed in the epistle, much less can it be expected, that there should be found in it any metaphysical distinctions, as to the manner of his operation.

There may, however, be

unconcerned, in bringing sinners home to God. But it is affirmed, that, be the sense of scripture what it may in this matter, it has nothing to do in establishing the meaning of the expression; which ought not to be supposed to have different meanings, in different parts of the epistle. For, when it is said in the 11th chapter: “The gifts and calling of God are without repentance;” this applying to the Jews, who were cut off because of their unbelief, and pointing to their being taken in again; it is evident, that the

believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?”

[Professor Michaelis remarks, in his Introduction to the New Testament, Vol 4. Ch. 14 Sec. 1, that “GREEK” is an expression borrowed from the Septuagint, to denote a congregation called together for divine worship.]

There is something further, however, to be said

of grace, as it respects good works; and of the relation in which the two subjects stand to one another. It is well known, that there have been entertained some opinions, ascribing merit to human works; and thus, detracting from the freedom of the grace of God: And to these opinions, there is generally opposed the doctrine held by Protestants, of justification by faith alone. Now, it has been argued against the representing of our acceptance as dependent on the cooperation of our endeavours, that this

detracts from the freedom of the grace; making the effect, in some degree, dependent on our works. It is foreign to the present design, to go fully into this question. Nothing more is exacted, than a proof, that the controverted matter handled by the Apostle, was of a different description from that which has become familiar in modern controversy; that no determination of this can be gathered from reasonings concerning the other; and that therefore, how far the affirming of the cooperation of man is an

epistle to the Hebrews; supposed to be attached to the laws of the Mosaick economy. And if we consider the reasons on which the Apostle denies this debt; and still more, the consequence which had been drawn from it, of the perpetual obligation of the law; and most of all, the effect of the principle on the condition of the Gentile converts; the present part of the subject will be set in a sufficiently perspicuous point of view.

The first argument used is, that Abraham, who was to be “a Father of many

nations;” that is, who was taken into a state of covenant designed to embrace those many, coming under him to the inheritance of it, was justified with God, before he was placed under the covenant referred to; his faith being counted to him for righteousness: *[v5]* his faith, considered as contrasted with works done in obedience to a covenanting law, and having no reference to a work, so far as it is morally good in itself and in its motive. Accordingly, St. James consistently

certainly, by the free grace of God, although it be not expressly said so. If it be replied, that all grace of God is through Christ, this will not be denied; although it will be contended, that the manner in which the grace is conferred is foreign to the present subject. But to return to the Apostle's argument. The way in which it applies to the purpose, is, as he expresses himself on the same subject in another epistle, that "the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was

during its continuance, it could give no claim; because it showed, more conspicuously than would otherwise have appeared, the imperfection of all those services of men, the claim of which, if there be any, must therefore rest on other grounds, than what could be found established by the law. All this is pertinent. But to suppose that the Apostle, in order to determine a controversy of a local nature, and to be judged of with the help of circumstances peculiar to a certain plea, should move, as relative to it, a question

5. OF PERSEVERANCE.

Opposition of the parties— Sense of Chapter 8, Verse 38, 39 - And of Chapter 11, Verse 29.

THE impossibility of falling finally from grace, is what the Calvinists affirm and the Arminians deny. The object here is to prove, that the epistle has nothing to the purpose of either of the parties.

In favor of the doctrine, there are not recollected more than two passages adduced. The first of them,

are the last two verses of the 8th chapter—

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Be it confessed, that none of them can separate, in the important matter mentioned: But may not a

man be so separated by his voluntary apostasy? That he may not, does by no means follow. It is analogous to a case easily supposed; that of a man, whose right to civil citizenship should be called in question. We may conceive of ourselves as advocating it, on the ground of constitution and law. In so doing, we might properly advert to all the machinations of his opponents; and then affirm, in the warmth of our attachment to his cause, that neither this man, nor another—and so

former with a strength effected by his own energy, lest they should perish; and that to the latter he does not furnish the same support, to the end that they may be examples of inconstancy.” [*Book 2. chapter 5 sec. 3*]

He also affirms the regeneration of infants, in the ordinance of baptism. For speaking of their case, he says —“The promise, in which we have explained the virtue of the sign to consist, is the same in both” (circumcision and baptism) “consisting in the fatherly favor of God,

regeneration, and that of the final perseverance of the Saints as now held by Calvinists, needs not be proved. Nevertheless, it must be confessed, that Calvin held the latter doctrine, as applicable to all in whom there had been the exercise of faith. In the 2d chapter of the 3d book of his Institutions, he maintains at large, that the least drop of faith is accompanied by a certainty of election: and in the 20th section, and both before and afterwards, he is express to the point, that of such a faith there cannot be

CONCLUSION.

*The points agreed on—
Reasons of the form of
this discussion— Remarks
on St. Paul's Epistles—
And on the Epistle to the
Romans in particular.*

THERE has often occurred to the author of this work, during the progress of it, the danger of a reader's suspecting him of an insidious design—that of insinuating concerning certain important subjects of religion, their being foreign to the sense of

They are agreed, in there being a departure in human nature, from its original righteousness; and this to such an extent, that no man can, of his own strength, raise himself above the condition in which the fall has placed him; or even make the least advance to that effect. It is alike agreed, concerning every step to restoration and every motion of the mind prompting to it, that they are induced by the agency of the divine spirit; the necessity of which is supposed, under all the distinctions and all the

applied to the same use, concerning the books of scripture generally: not indeed to prove, that they decide nothing in the controversy; for it is here thought that they decide a great deal; but to show, that there are some metaphysical discussions improperly introduced into theology, and not at all spoken to in the word of truth.

At present, however, the author has no right to affirm further, than to the extent of what he supposes to be the result of the examination of the epistle

that the Apostle spoke more conformably to the Arminian, than to the Calvinistick hypothesis, than by there being proved, as is conceived to be actually the case, that the Apostle had another subject in contemplation; that every part of his argument. is strictly pertinent to it; and that there is no evidence in the composition, of there having crossed his mind, during the writing of it, a single thought on either side of any one of the points comprehended in the controversy.

Paul's epistles, but to the things spoken of in them.]

Now, although sincerity of intention will prevent us, under the influence of divine grace, from abusing any part of scripture to our destruction; yet, in regard to the epistle to the Romans, we shall never, without the use of extraneous helps winch divine providence has furnished, obtain a dear apprehension of what an Apostle found difficult to be understood: and this itself should induce modesty in our interpretation, be it

censure. At least, he has endeavoured to avoid whatever could justly expose him to this: For while he has exercised his own right of religious inquiry, he has respected the rights of any others whom he has had occasion to advert to, either by name or otherwise; not having criminated or thrown odium, to the best of his recollection, or with design, either on the motives or on the tendency of their writings.

To some it may give offence, that so considerable a book of holy

out of Sion the Deliverer,
and shall turn away
ungodliness from Jacob.”
There is in this a powerful
incentive of faith and hope;
especially when we observe
before our eyes, existing
monuments of the
accomplishment of the
threatening; and when we
perceive the train laid, of
events pointing to the
better accomplishment of
the promise; and destined
to demonstrate, in regard
to the ancient people, that
the calling of them is
“without repentance.” And
it is further obvious,
concerning the splendour

of Hosts.”

Besides, that the branches of the Apostle's discourse may be made sources of information by easy and obvious accommodation; there shine forth, in this argumentative part of the epistle, divine truths alike applicable to all times and places. Such as the entailment of death, in consequence of Adam's sin; the danger of a second death, as the consequence of our own sins; the struggle between natural appetite and the better desire of the mind, which every man finds attested by

injuries, to which it disposes; and finally, in the hopes, beyond any the world can give, of which it is the ground. These, and other like to these, are salutary truths, lying conspicuous on the face of the discursive portions of the epistle.

But even had there been nothing of the description stated, imbodyed with the argument, the composition would have been rendered invaluable, by the moral instructions contained in the concluding chapters. How cold are the morals of a Cicero, of a Seneca, and of

APPENDIX: ON THE CASE OF THE HEATHEN

*Calvin and others on the
Subject — Calvinistick
Churches — The Point of
Difference between
Christians and the
Heathen — Authorities
from the Old Testament —
The Circumstances of
Idolatry — Authorities
from the New Testament.*

IT was hinted in the introduction to this work, that there attached to the general question of it the subordinate question, how

ministers of the Gospel expressing the hope, that God extends his mercy to the virtuous heathen: But some of them entertain this hope in such a manner as proves, that however agreeable the expectation to their own humane minds, they are not without apprehension of their having gone further, than they are warranted by the Oracles of God. The object of this appendix is to prove, that it is a conspicuous truth of Holy Scripture.

As the appendix is designed to supply a defect, because of a point rather

even by their own testimony.” And just before, commenting on Romans, 2:14. he had said—“Because it might have seemed absurd, that the Gentiles should perish without any previous knowledge, he” (the Apostle) “immediately subjoins, that their conscience supplies the place of a law to them; and is therefore sufficient for their condemnation.” Conformably to this, when speaking of predestination in the 5th section of the 21st chapter of his 3d book, he says— “This, God has

any other. They have more information of the process of the moral government of God, from the creation to the consummation of all things. They have more ample and more excellent instructions for the government of life. They have more persuasive motives to a suitable practice. In the event of falling into sin, they have stronger incitements to repentance; especially in the communication made to them of the great sacrifice for sin, and of acceptance through its merits. They have

Although, in the epistle itself, we find the Apostle incidentally speaking to the purpose, as was stated in the introduction; yet it is hardly to be expected, that he should have discoursed of it professedly; because there was nothing in the economy under which he lived, so circumscribing the divine favor, as to suggest a reasonable doubt concerning the future condition of the virtuous Heathen. To be within the covenant was a distinguishing privilege, in the estimation of a devout Jew. But there was no

although they could not save the city, were themselves saved by a permitted flight; what are we to conclude, but that the fugitives are affirmed by scripture history to be righteous? And as to Lot himself, he is expressly so called by St. Peter. 2d. Ep. 2:8.

Next, when we read of Abimelech King of Gerar, on the occasion of a judgment brought on his subjects, drawing nigh to God with the expostulation—"Lord wilt thou slay also a righteous nation;" and when we find

the same Abimelech the subject of a divine admonition and promise, it is not natural to conceive of himself and of his people, as cast off from the love of God.

Another instance is Melchisedeck, King of Salem; a righteous king, as is denoted by his name. This man was evidently without the covenant; and yet, he is called a priest of the most high God, and made a type of the Messiah, who is “a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedeck.”

We may go on, beyond

is—No other excuse, than such as is commonly made under the Christian law, for men upright in general character; but misled, in certain instances, by the errors of their respective times. To mention a single instance: It would be difficult to demonstrate, that the offering of homage to a supposed subordinate divinity, or the worshipping of the one only God after the symbol of an image, is in itself more faulty and more inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, than the taking of life for supposed errors in religion.

*stating of the above
would suffice for the
refutation of it.]*

When it is said in Luke
12:47, 48—

“That servant which knew
his lord’s will, and
prepared not himself,
neither did according to
his will, shall be beaten
with many stripes, but he
that knew not, and did
commit things worthy of
stripes, shall be beaten
with few stripes;”

it is implied, that men will

be judged, according to the dispensations under which they have been respectively placed:

There being nothing in the declaration, the principle of which does not reach to the full extent of this.

The case of Cornelius is very significative. Let it not be said, for the evasion of the inference to be drawn from it, that this man was convened to the Christian faith, at the expense of a miracle. While he was yet a heathen, his prayers and alms came “up for a memorial before God;” being accepted—for this

must be implied—through the merits of him, than whom “there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.” On the case of Cornelius is grounded the declaration of St. Peter concerning the virtuous heathen generally—

“In every nation, he that feareth him,” God, “and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”

[The way of withdrawing Cornelius from the operation of the principle here pleaded for, is by supposing that

of the providential care of God in the present life: Still, if that care be extended to men, only to aggravate a condemnation, necessarily resulting from the circumstances in which the same providence had placed them; such declarations, to say the least, are not to the purpose for which they seem to have been made, of magnifying the goodness of the divine Being.

There is another remarkable passage in St. Matthew 8:11. compared with St. Luke 13:29. The words are nearly the same

in both Gospels; but in St. Matthew, they are—"Many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." It has been made a question, whether this relates to the influx of the heathen into the church; or to the admission of persons of that description, being virtuous, into heaven. It cannot be denied, that some judicious commentators give it the former turn; but as the latter is here preferred, the reasons shall be given.

What has principally led to the supposition, that the passage relates to professors of Christianity, is, that in St. Matthew, the recited words come in just after the healing of the servant of a Roman centurion; with a commendation of his faith, as superior to any found in Israel: And there seems something very pertinent in the sentiment, that many, of the same description with this centurion, would, like him, exercise faith in the Messiah. In St. Luke, however, the declaration is in almost the same words;

but without the record of any such circumstance, appearing to give a limitation to the meaning.

In both passages, they are said to come “from the east and from the west;” with the addition in the latter passage, of the words, “and from the north and from the south.” But the propagation of the Gospel among the heathen, was not by their coming to the original seat of it: It was by its being carried to them.

The converts to the Christian faith, could not sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the

Christians: Whereas, the opposition ought to be between the former, and such persons as the centurion, that is, heathens. The manner in which the three passages last quoted are treated by Dr. Doddridge, is worthy of notice. In his interpretation of that of St. Matthew 8:11, and that of St. Luke 13:29, he has not a word expressive of the sentiment of other writers on his system, limiting the description of the righteous to a proportion of the professors of all nations; but gives an interpretation

which implies, but does not positively express the opinion, here sustained. It is more evidently implied, although still not expressed, in his interpretation and improvement of Matthew 18:11. But when he comes to the passage in the 10th chapter of the Acts, the opinion is evident in the interpretation, and still more so in a note; in which he comments as follows on the words—

**"He that feareth him and
worketh righteousness is**

accepted with him." —

“This, for anything I can see, might be supposed the case of many, who were far from being in any degree Jewish proselytes, and had never heard of the Jews and their religion, as it was certainly the case of many, before the peculiarities of Judaism existed, and even before the institution of the Abrahamick covenant. I think this text proves, that God would sooner send an angel to direct pious and upright persons to the

knowledge of the Gospel, than suffer them to perish by ignorance of it.”

The above is exactly to the present purpose. But in the remainder of the note, principally intended to distinguish the case of Cornelius, from that of persons who reject Christian light bestowed, Dr. Doddridge seems to have entertained the further design of avoiding a shock to prejudice, by what had gone before. For, speaking of the sense of the passage as opened by him,

PART 2

*A Comparison of the
Controversy between the
Calvinists and the
Arminians, with Holy
Scripture generally.*

INTRODUCTION.

*Dissent from
Calvinism—Not on
Arminian
Principles—Origin of
Calvinism—Its
Progress—Its Alliance
with Philosophical
Necessity—Difference
between this and Original*

*Calvinism— Net in the
Decrees of the Synod of
Dort—Since embraced by
various
Calvinists—Proposal to
exclude it from Theology—
Result, is the stating of
Scripture Doctrine.*

THE author, wishing to give an early insight of his design, begins with the intimation, that it will be, principally, to prove what he believes to be the errors of the Calvinistick system; while yet, the opinions which he is about to oppose to them will not be built on the Arminian foundation.

He conceives of the peculiarities of Calvinism, that they are human inventions; introduced, at no very early period, into Christian theology. The objects which he proposes to keep in view, throughout the succeeding investigation of passages of scripture, are the following.

In regard to the first link in the chain—predestination, as applied by Calvinists to individual persons and their condition in another life; it is conceived to be a subject, on which the scriptures are silent. If this

be correct, it must be evident, that both the parties have acted under an error. The Calvinist thinks, that the glory of the sovereignty of God cannot be supported, otherwise than by the opinion, that he foreordained some of the human race to everlasting happiness, and others of them to everlasting misery, without reference to any good to be done by them respectively; and even that he called them into existence, for the very purpose of illustrating his mercy and his justice, in these opposite ends

does not inquire. But he proposes to show, that a preceding eternity itself being beyond the grasp of the human understanding; the scriptures, harmonizing with this property of our being, have left all that concerns our destination from eternity, under the dark veil behind which the subject itself lies hid. Or, in other words, there is nothing declared to us, that applies at all to God's eternal decree concerning the everlasting condition, either happy or miserable, of his creatures. If this be fact, it follows, that what is

affirmed by the Calvinists on the one hand, or by the Arminians on the other, whether there be truth or falsehood in either of them, is not Christian doctrine, but metaphysical speculation.

Another position to be maintained, in the progress of the inquiry, is, that the doctrine of absolute and unconditional predestination being laid down as scriptural, there followed of course from it, all the other peculiarities of Calvinism; which were indeed called for, in order to render the system

spoken of some elected and of others passed by, he says [*Book 2. chapter 5. section 3*] — “It is owing to this, that some persevere while others fall; perseverance itself being the gift of God; which he bestows, not on all, but as seems good to him.”

Although there is here a delineation of one new opinion giving birth to another, and this to a third; and onward, until a theory became complete; yet it is far from being thought, that there was a deliberate design to corrupt the word of God, by matters of

self-sufficiency. It is further here acknowledged, that if these are the genuine growth of the opinions on the subjects which are to be given in the present work, in opposition to Calvinism; they show error—deadly error, on their very faces. But if everything of this sort can be avoided, without resorting to doctrines so shocking as those of Calvinism are here conceived to be to the reason of mankind, the author supposes himself at liberty to treat those doctrines as the imaginations of men,

contradictory of the tenets of Calvinism, as held in the beginning—and yet, that modern Calvinism has placed reliance on it for her support.

In regard to the origin of the doctrine, current opinion mentions Thomas Hobbes as having given the first hints of it: A name, of which it was not supposed, in the age in which he lived, that it would in after times become allied to anything favorable to piety or to morals.

[Dr. Priestley, in his correspondence with Dr.

This test shall be applied, as it affects man in his innocency, in his fall, and in his renewal.

In his innocency, there must have been, according to the doctrine, a propellent motive; which produced his fall necessarily, by means of the dependence of every effect on its proper cause. But Calvin thought otherwise; for he says: “We grant that such was the primitive condition of man during his state of integrity; that it was in his power to incline to one side or the other”

as will appear presently, he thought the distinction, as applied to the present subject, both trivial and dangerous. Besides, his considering of freewill as distinguishing the innocency of man from the circumstances induced by the apostasy, shows beyond all doubt, that he designed to hold up the high endowment in question, as involving the independence of the morality of his conduct on any necessarily predisposing cause. Calvin's idea of the liberty of Adam, as opposed, not to force, but to necessity, is

clearly unfolded in the eighth section of the sixteenth chapter of his first book; of which a small part is quoted above.

The very circumstance of the change which has taken place among the Calvinists, in regard to the use of the word freewill, shows the accommodation of their ideas concerning man's state in his apostasy, to the Necessarian scheme. By the loss of freewill, the early Calvinists meant no more, than the subjection of the will to corrupt passion and inordinate desire: And accordingly, there is not in

summoned for the purpose of extirpating opposing opinions; and for the guarding against any which might otherwise arise in future. However inimical both Calvin and the Synod of Dort to the name of freewill, it seems to have been adopted by their followers generally, within half a century after the Synod. For Professor Turretine, of Geneva, a standard writer of the Calvinistick opinion, not only uses the word and defends it in his system of divinity, [*Locus 9. chap. 41*] but considers the

President of Princeton College. Whether this be exactly the fact, the knowledge of Calvinistick writers may not be sufficiently author's extensive to determine: But that necessity, in the sense of the philosophers, is the distinguishing feature of President Edwards's celebrated Treatise on Freewill, and that the subject is there handled with great ability, will doubtless be acknowledged by all who have perused the book. It is well known, and might be made appear, that the principles thus

have written so much and so zealously in favor of Calvinism, as Mr. Toplady and Dr. Haweis; both of whom have considered the Calvinistick scheme as supported by the Necessarian. Mr. Toplady, in various places, treats it as the height of impiety and of folly to deny them: And as to Dr. Haweis, it is obvious how decided a Necessarian he must have been in the circumstance, that, however great St. Austin in the estimation of Calvin, and however great in that of all those reformers and of others

particularly Augustine, Theophilus Gale, and a class of German theologians of the school of Leibnitz." As to Austin, it would be difficult to show, in what respects he differs materially from Calvin, who evidently considered himself as treading in his steps. It is remarkable, that Calvin is not mentioned by Dr. Smith, among the few who are noticed as giving their sanction to his own view of Calvinism: And as to looking back to Austin for the ground work of the Necessarian scheme, there is here doubted the

propriety of it. There seems no other coincidence in the two opinions, than what may be found in two roads, which, beginning in different quarters, come in contact at certain points. With the writings of Theophilus Gale, the writer of this is unacquainted. He was certainly a Calvinistick divine, of eminent reputation: And if his works contain the principles of philosophical necessity, Dr. Priestley has been mistaken in mentioning President Edwards, as the first Calvinist who had owned

them. Dr. Smith's claim to the countenance of the Leibnitzian school is not to be denied; and his introducing of its authority is to the purpose for which his own is introduced, in the present work. He does not go into argument on the subject of the controversy; but only professes to give a correct statement of the Calvinistick opinions; in order to guard against what he thinks a mistaken representation of them by Mr. Belsham. It seems inconsistent, that the former, writing with this

himself, all who thought with him in his day, and afterwards, the whole body of the Synod of Dort. If the standard must be looked for in the junction stated by Dr. Smith, to be made with the Leibnitzian scheme; that standard, and the confessions of the Calvinistick churches should be considered henceforth as wide of one another.

At the same time, it is worthy of remark, how coldly Calvinism, in this her new form, is received by her solicited ally—Philosophical

necessity. Dr. Priestley, in his work on the latter subject, is careful to point out the differences between the two. And now, his friend Mr. Belsham—a Necessarian also—refuses to know Calvinism, except as contained in publick confessions. Not so, indeed, Lord Kaims; as set forth already. But the reason of the difference is discernable. His Essay on Liberty and Necessity had subjected him to the charge of irreligion. Accordingly, he availed himself of the aid of President Edwards's book on the will, which

more names to the present point, when satisfaction may so easily be obtained from many sources, accessible in common life. But there is a note to a passage in Dr. Mosheim's History, so much to the purpose, that it ought not to be overlooked. Mosheim had spoken of the Arminians [*Century 17, sec. 2. part 2.*] declining as a sect; but of Arminianism, as increasing in the established church of the Netherlands. But his learned annotator, Dr. Maclean, who had the best opportunities of personal

information, thinks it proper to remark, that the progress of Arminianism has been there greatly checked, and even that its cause daily declines in Germany and several parts of Switzerland; in consequence of the ascendancy which the Leibnitzian and Wolfian philosophy has gained in those countries, and particularly among the clergy and men of learning. It is foreign to the present purpose to inquire, with what correctness the reasonings deduced from the said philosophy have

been applied. It is sufficient, that the armour, thus wielded in defence of what is thought a Christian fortress, was wrought on a foreign anvil: And this is only brought in aid of the considerations intended to prove, that the works defended are of human and not of divine structure.

This leads to another object of the ensuing investigation; a and mere inference from what has been premised: The effect of which will be, if the view to be here taken of the subject should be correct, that there ought to be an

bounds prescribed to his understanding; and to dogmatize on subjects, concerning which there are no data to be reasoned from with certainty, and authorizing to conclude with safety. There are evidences of this busy and presumptuous spirit, operating within the bounds of the Christian church, in the days of the Apostles. St. Paul, in particular, alludes to it in several places; and speaks of it most expressly, when, in his first epistle to Timothy, [*Chap. 6:20*] he notices “oppositions of

the modestly tendering of it, in contrariety to the pretence of absurdity, or of inconsistency in the sacred oracles. But from the circumstance there can be no plea resulting, to demand submission to human theory.

The last matter to be stated, as the expected result of the ensuing investigation, is, that the anti-Calvinistick opinion, on some points especially interesting to the feelings of mankind in general, are to be declared to them without reserve. Particularly, if individual

and discriminative predestination should be proved a fabrication of the human imagination, the contrary truth of salvation, wrought for all men and offered alike to all, is to be indiscriminately offered; without the latent sting of a distinction between a revealed and a secret will; the former holding out the offer of a good, which the latter keeps back under the strong hold of an irresistible decree. In like manner, if there should appear no ground for the distinction between ordinary and efficacious

1. OF PREDESTINATION.

*Of the Term “Decree”
—Predestination only
incidentally found in other
Books —Predestination
and Election mean the
same in all —Phrases,
thought similar in Sense
—The Situation of St. Paul
—Sundry Passages of
Scripture —A constructive
Sense - Useless
Questions—Rules —The
Subject, being foreign to
Scripture, must be judged
of on Principles of
Reason—A Point, on which
the Parties are agreed—A*

Deduction from what should be considered as the Point of Difference—The Result, in Relation to the Divine Attributes.

ON the very threshold of this gloomy building, the attention of the author is drawn to what he considers as no slight evidence of its having been raised, not by scripture, but by metaphysicks. It is the necessity which has occurred of calling in the word, “decree,” to answer some purpose, to which the word, “predestination” does not extend. For there

or “statute,” as in Isaiah 8:1. And in the New Testament, the word so translated is found in Acts 16:4, and 17:7. This introduction of the word “decree” has an unfavorable aspect on those views of the subject—and they are many—to which there could have been no extension of the word “predestination.” The distinction here taken must now, however, be lost sight of; because the ensuing investigation is to be of the sense of scripture only; which knows nothing of the

be presumed, in order to render the sense consistent and complete. It is not so with the epistle to the Romans. In this, if the doctrine be found at all, it was what principally occupied the mind of the writer, during the latter part of the eighth and the whole of the ninth chapter. If therefore it should have appeared, that those passages relate to quite another subject; respecting nothing else than national designation to the visible church; there may reasonably be suspected a mistake, in the supposed

communion were not at all to be affected. In what extent the remark applies to the passages which are to come under review, may be worthy of some consideration, as they shall present themselves.

But it is here conceived, that another advantage may be fairly claimed, in consequence of what has been already written on the epistle to the Romans. If the principles there advocated should be thought correct, especially in regard to the term predestination, this and its kindred word election may

reasonably be supposed to have the same meaning, in the other epistles of the same Apostle. Thus, when he tells the Ephesians, speaking of the Father's "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to himself;" [1:5] and when he says to the Thessalonians: [1:1—4] "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God;" and to the same people in his other epistle to them—"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation;" [2:13] he can mean no more, than to support a truth which he

has often occasion to refer to, in opposition to the favorers of legality, that the Gentiles were called, in an emancipation from the institutions of the law. And nothing could so effectually sustain this sentiment, as the resting of it on the divine purpose, entertained before the giving of the law, and even before the foundation of the world.

The passage from the 2d epistle to the Thessalonians, is thought to give weight to the Calvinistick interpretation, by the words, “from the beginning.” It seems

and condition of every member of every Church which he addressed in such language as that recited; to justify his affirming of them without exception, that they were “chosen” or “predestinated” to everlasting life. It would have ill accorded with what is said in the epistle from which the first recited text was taken, when the writer admonishes those whom he was addressing: “Take to yourselves the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil;” going on in an expressive allegorical

description of the dangers of the spiritual warfare. And then, why there should be such dangers from the formidable foe alluded to, it seems impossible to account for on the principle here supposed. Did St. Paul so explicitly announce to the Ephesian church, the election to eternal life of all and every one of them? And was the prince of darkness less able than they and we, to comprehend it? Or knowing it, was he so unwise, as to waste his efforts for their destruction? He had

salvation, it was another subject and rested on other grounds.

But even if the construction of the words here given were to be abandoned; and they were to be interpreted of every individual and his condition in another life; it would not appear, with what propriety, the subject is connected with the operation of the eternal mind of God. The remotest dates referred to by the New Testament, as connected with any predestination, or election of which it speaks, is what

the affirming of the decrees of God, that they are eternal. Professor Witsius acknowledges that the expressions: “From the foundation of the world,” and “before the foundation of the world,” do not necessarily signify eternity. And he further acknowledges [*Book 3 chap. 4 sec. 15*] the same concerning the expression: “Before the world began.” And yet the same author quotes Ephesians 3:11, as directly declaring the eternity of God’s decree; whereas it would seem the furthest from it of all the

will also carry them back without end. Far be the author of the present work, from denying this: Still, it is only an inference from what we are satisfied of, concerning the unbeginning existence of the divine mind. What difference then, it may be said, do the two opinions make, in regard to the sense of the words in question? The difference is very material: the opinion here contradicted, making the subject of the Apostle quite wide of that occupying his mind; which was a series of

made on the word translated “eternal.” As applied to the present subject, it cannot mean a strict and proper eternity: It cannot in the passage quoted from the epistle to Titus; because the ages there spoken of, are connected with a promise confessedly made in time: And it cannot, even in that quoted from the epistle to Timothy; because all time must have had a beginning, as well as an end. The Greek words in question may be not improperly translated— “The times of

But for the construction thus given, the cause is indebted to the severing of the 4th verse from the 3rd, which makes a part of the same sentence. It is—“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ.” The sense of the place is, there being conferred on the Ephesians spiritual blessings, to the end that they should be holy. The predestinating of them to be a church gathered from among the heathens, is a circumstance

and proper eternity, or only an indefinite term of time, in the passages in question; they have no immediate relation to a future life, or to the conditions of individuals in it; the subject to which they relate being the church on earth.

It was natural, that of all the inspired writers, St. Paul should the most abound in references to antecedent determinations of the sovereign will of God, concerning his kingdom on earth recently founded by his omnipotence. The mission of this Apostle was especially to the Gentiles.

All his epistles to churches, are principally to those of the Gentile sort, except the epistle to the Hebrews, which, conformably with the view here taken of the subject, has nothing concerning predestination, or election, or purpose. Further, he found himself continually thwarted in his ministry, by a mixture of Judaism and Christianity; which had its foundation in the error, that there was but one chosen people; in the mass of whom, of course, all the receivers of the new doctrine should be merged. That St. Paul is

continually taking occasion to contradict this error; and that he has largely refuted it in his epistle to the Romans and in that to the Galatians, will not be denied by any. It is equally evident, that, in so doing, he has shown at some length, how far his sense of a Gentile church was from being a novelty, and that, on the contrary, it might be clearly seen in promises made before the giving of the law. Under these circumstances, it is not to be wondered at, that the Apostle, even in his salutations of particular

grace, distinguished from the saving grace affirmed to be invariably followed by perseverance. Accordingly, it is not reasonable to give to the expressions of this Apostle such a construction, as wings them with delusion to some; and with the danger of relaxation of endeavour, in regard to all. It may be here proper to apply to the texts which have been examined, the remark already made—that even taking them in the Calvinistick sense, it can be drawn from them no otherwise, than as taught

incidentally; or else by way of inference. For it will not be contended, that when different churches are addressed as the elect or chosen of God, their election is the prominent sentiment in the writer's mind. His principal purpose, in each place, is to deliver a different matter of instruction; and the other is at most a circumstance attached to it. But it may be said—the election spoken of is presumed; and built on as an acknowledged doctrine of the Gospel. There may be reason in this, if the remark made

were applicable to some places only; and if the doctrine in question were taught often and explicitly elsewhere: Which is the matter principally intended to be here denied.

The hope then is entertained of its having been made to appear, that, exclusively of the epistle to the Romans, there are no circumstances attached to the other epistles of St. Paul, which rescue them from what is contended for, as the proper sense of scriptural predestination; but on the contrary, that there are considerations

It could have been grounded on nothing else, than God's choice of the Israelites, to be a people in covenant with him; to be favored with a revelation of his will; and to maintain on earth the profession of the belief of one true God, the Creator of heaven and earth, until the appointed time of gathering a church from among all nations. The same title of "the elect" or "the chosen," is applied indiscriminately to the people of Israel, in Isaiah, in Jeremiah, and in the Psalms. It was therefore a maintaining of the style of

and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.” There seems very little appearance of reason, in the Calvinistick interpretation of the latter text. The word “but” is supposed to be used to express, not exception, but opposition, which makes the sentiment of the text—“none,” meaning of those given, “lost, but the son of perdition is lost.” If our Saviour extended his view beyond the sphere to which his discourse had been before confined, were there none lost but Judas? Yet it

follows that there were none but he, if we suppose any spoken of besides “the chosen” or “the given;” of which, accordingly, Judas was one. Dr. Doddridge remarks, that the Greek word is not always strictly an exceptive particle; and has quoted some passages in support of his remark. Still, as it is generally and properly exceptive, it would seem reasonable to understand it as so used, at least whenever this the best agrees with the tendency of the discourse: Which is the case in the present instance; there being

should fall; that when he spoke in chapter 17 his purpose in their behalf, except as to one of them, had prevailed; and that what he said in chapter 18 was in pursuance of the same design; which is so expressly declared, in the last mentioned place, to have been directed to the safety of their persons, that it seems impossible to bend it to any other subject. Thus, from the comparing of the quotation as it stands in the New Testament, with its station in the Old, there arises a confirmation of the sense which is here thought

advised. The clause evidently intimates no more, than that the accomplishment of the purpose was problematical. Such lax phraseology is frequent in every language; and may be mentioned as an additional proof of the impropriety of founding doctrine on particular expressions; in which the object of the speaker is something distinct from the doctrine, whether true or false.

There is also a class of texts brought up, consisting of declarations of the immutability of the

counsels of God; and of his foreknowledge of all the events, which were to be brought about in the order of his providence: such as that in Isaiah 46:10— "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:" that in Daniel, 4:35—"He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;" and that in Prov. 19:21—"The counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." In the New Testament also it is said - "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;" [*Eph. 1:11*] and "Known unto God are

all his works, from the beginning of the world.”
[Acts 15:18] Many other passages might be mentioned, to the same effect; but they avail nothing, in contrariety to those who acknowledge the sovereignty and the foreknowledge of God, in their extent. What they demand, is scriptural authority to show, that his foreknowledge is exercised or his sovereignty illustrated, in the predetermination contemplated by the subject. Is it not evident in the producing of such

passages, that the doctrine is first presumed; and then proof given, of the unchangeableness of the event to which it refers?

There is another class of texts, which speak of wicked men, and of God's making of their wickedness the medium of their destruction: The Calvinistick interpretation of which is predicated on the supposition, that God makes them wicked, with a view to that unhappy end; although no intimation to such an effect is given in the texts themselves. Thus where it is said in Joshua

11:20, concerning the Canaanitish nations—"It was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly;" it amounts to no more, than that those nations being very wicked, and, on that account, their excision being determined on by the Lord of life and death; his providence so disposed the series of events, as to incite them to hazard battle with a power, before which they had not strength to stand.—Their wickedness had been frequently spoken of in the

making; but signifies to go through a work, or bring it to effect. As applied in this place, it means, that God so disposes matters, as to cause the wickedness of men to bring them to the day of evil: if indeed evil to them be the matter intended in this place; and not rather their being the instruments of accomplishing the divine purposes, in evil to be brought on others; as in the case of the king of Assyria, [Isa. 10:5] who was, in the hands of God, the rod of his anger and the staff of his indignation against the

surrounding nations. The words will bear either interpretation; and therefore, if there were nothing else to hinder, ought not to be applied to any sense repugnant to correct ideas of the Godhead. The latter interpretation is much countenanced by the Hebrew word [*HEB. WORD*] which is expressive of one thing answering to another.

What great stress Calvin laid on this text, may be seen book 3 chapter 23 section 6. He notices an objection made by some to

return. So much for the end of the denunciation: and for the cause of it, we must look to the preceding parts of the prophecy, which is principally filled with lamentations of abounding wickedness; and this was, of course, what produced the denunciation. The nation being excessively corrupt, and this corruption being about to be punished by a seventy years banishment from their country; the preaching of the prophet was, in itself indeed, a dispensation full of grace; but is here contemplated as

[Although this text has been stated as not applying to the matter at issue; yet it is conceived, that the words admit of a material emendation, from the Syriack version which is “[GREEK WORDS].” Of this, the present writer presumes to propose the following translation— “At which [stone] they stumble, who are disobedient to the word; to which [word] they also were set [or placed or appointed.]” If an objection should be founded on the neuter gender of the pronoun,

which they were laid."

In Griesbach's text of the New Testament, the sentiment here given is sustained, by his connecting of "[GREEK WORDS]" not with "[GREEK WORDS]" but with "[GREEK WORDS]".

In the sentiment here considered as offensive, the reading kept in view is the vulgate; of which, however, it is a hard construction. The vulgate is - "Iis qui offendunt verbo, nec credunt in quod et positi sunt." The being appointed to the word seems a more

meaning of the word. It is, “before written;” and in its connexion may properly be translated, “of whom it was before written.” It must mean, either that the end of such ungodly men might be seen, foretold in prophecy; or that their destruction might be traced, either by themselves or by others, in the ends of former ungodly men on record. Nothing can be further from the sense of the passage, than that their being ungodly was part of the ordainment. The last of the two interpretations, is that given by Dr. Doddridge,

temporal promise, if it had not been quoted by St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans, and there thought to have a reference to everlasting happiness. The passage has been already noticed in the first department of the present work. But as this was merely because of its relation to the argument of St. Paul, there may be propriety in noticing it here also. The word translated: "I will be gracious," means strictly: "I will seize or take possession;" and although thought to be applicable to benignity, according to the

modern use has very much applied the word; and hence the facility with which, as it stands in Exodus and in the epistle to the Romans, there is drawn from it a meaning apparently not in contemplation in either place.

Much also has been built on Deuteronomy 29:4. "The Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, until this day." Now nothing could have been more foreign to the design of Moses, in a discourse which is a mixture of

exhortation and reproof, than to have told the Israelites, that their past blindness or disobedience had been owing to a withholding of the grace of God. The more natural sense, therefore, is, that the root of the deficiency was in themselves. But in truth the text, without the least violence, may be made to bear a sense the very reverse of that translation. The sense alluded to arises from making the words an interrogation, as in 2. Kings 5:26 —“Went not mine heart with thee?” &c Other places might be mentioned,

unto a rebellious people:"
going on to describe their
own prevalent

idolatry and other
wickedness. St Paul, in the
20th verse of the 10th
chapter to the Romans,
closely applies the
prophecy as here
interpreted, to the people
of whom it is designed: But
Calvinists apply the
antecedent part of it to the
predestinating decree of
God; which accomplishes
its end, without any seeking
of the persons on whom it
lights. The words are the
vehicle of the same
sentiment, and relate to the

The theory here opposed, continually applying personally what was meant collectively, does not disdain to lay stress on what is said in Matthew 15:13—“Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.” The Greek word signifies not so properly a single plant, as a collection of plants; that is, a garden or plantation. The accusation had been made by our Saviour just before, concerning the Pharisees, that they “taught for doctrines the

commandments of men.” Then, on being told that they were offended at his saying, he uttered the denunciation now in question. It means, that the assumed authority of this hypocritical sect, would fall under the divinely instituted authority of the spiritual kingdom of the speaker.

The text last noticed, is urged by Professor Witsius; who also supposes something to his purpose in Luke 10:20—“In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your

clearly gathered truths, attached to other subjects, and growing, as it were, out of them. The matter contended for, is merely that there are no leading truths of scripture, which are not taught more expressly, and as being principally within the contemplation of the writers.

If these things are so; on how slight a foundation, or rather how without any foundation, has there been erected a superstructure of systematick doctrine! To take notice, in the first place, of the controversy

which gave occasion to the present discussion: There has been presumed to have been taught in scripture, a doctrine of predestination, relative to the future condition of individuals. The matter contested between the opposite parties has been, whether the decree were founded on prescience of good and ill. And what were the consequences in the confiscation of property, and in the banishment of persons, besides all the wrath and the malice excited, with their deplorable effects in a

mankind, for the express purpose of illustrating his mercy in the salvation of some, and his justice in the damnation of others. But the latter represent the same great Being, contemplating the creation and the fall together; and founding his decrees on his designs in respect to both those descriptions of persons, although without respect to good and evil to be done by them respectively. These are not yet the only airy castles of predestinarian controversy. For it has been thought of moment to inquire, and to

of inquiry forbidden to the human intellect; qualified, as we find it, to explore the wonders of earth and heaven?

To this let it be answered, in the first place, that in inquiries relative either to spirit or to matter, we cannot reasonably proceed to determination, without first having data, on which to ground it. It was allowable in Des Cartes to contemplate the system of the universe, in order to discover the laws which guide its motions: But he did not act philosophically, when he delivered the

unproved doctrine of his vortices. In like manner, the metaphysician may look back to and adore the eternal wisdom and goodness, which brought this fair creation into being: But let him beware of fabricating a system, intended to have an operation on faith and practice; unless, indeed, some metaphysical Newton should arise, who, by discovering and demonstrating principles unthought of hitherto, shall carry irresistible conviction. This, however, is here apprehended to be

forbidden by the nature of the subject.

It is another reasonable rule resulting, that if a man will speculate and form a system without demonstrable principles to support it, although perhaps with principles which may appear demonstrable to himself, he should at least take care, that his system be not such as leads to conclusions, directly contrary to the clearest dictates of the understandings of mankind; and especially, in what relates to the adorable perfections of the Godhead.

remarks to the present subject is obvious. We are told in scripture, that “the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.” *[Rom. 1:20]* And although only “his eternal power and godhead” are instanced, yet the sentiment may be extended to his attributes generally. But when we speak of the goodness of God and of his justice, we cannot but conceive of these properties as the same in kind, however infinitely higher the sense

in which they are applied, with what we find in men. And we certainly cannot err, in conceiving of them as thus the same in kind; when the great Lord of heaven and earth has not disdained, in the revelation which he has given us of his will, to invite us to judge of his dealings towards us, by the same rules of equity which apply to our dealings with one another.

But further—and this is another matter to be exacted—if men will speculate and systematize, either disregarding the consequences seen to

Providence of God. Even in regard to this favored communion, it has been shown, as is here hoped, that predestination, as affirmed in scripture, looks no farther back than to the beginning of the dispensations connected with the event. And even for this retrospect, there has been shown a powerful reason in the necessity of contradicting a prejudice; which treated the coming in of the Gentiles, otherwise than under the wing of Judaism, as a novel device, for which there was no ground in antecedent

promise.

The other sense of predestination is, as marking out from eternity some to everlasting happiness, and others to everlasting misery. But it has been endeavoured to be shown, that of this, either as founded on rescience or as independent on it, the scriptures are silent.

If so, the subject rests on reason, and our natural sense of propriety: And on this ground, what can be more offensive, than the sustaining of the sovereignty of God in such a manner, as is contrary to

there is even hope entertained, of showing in what is now to be remarked, that the opposite parties of Calvinists and Arminians are not so remote from one another, on the present point of an appeal to reason, as to a transient observer might appear.

There has been already referred to the decision of the Calvinists, that God cannot condemn an innocent creature to everlasting torments. And we find, in Professor Turretine's system of Divinity, under his 9th

that it is so and therefore cannot be, let the point of difference be duly marked; and let there not be charged as criminal, the comparing of what is proclaimed to be divine truth, with what we gather concerning the nature of God, from reflecting on the operations of our own minds and from his works.

But as the point now contemplated is a fruitful source of what logicians call the argument to modesty, [*Argumentum ad modestiam*] brought forward for the silencing of debate; there may be

lurking doubts of the correctness of their theory. But if the truth of it should be confirmed to them in that future state of being, in which we are warranted to expect to have an enlarged view of the divine dispensations; condemnation, whatever may be the nature of the punishment consequent on it in other respects, cannot, it would seem, produce the reproaches of a convicted conscience. A contrary opinion, would suppose that venerable monitor determined to possess properties hereafter, quite

illustrating of his glory in damnation. The question then between them is, not of the lawfulness of applying the maxims of reason to the ways of heaven, but of the propriety of the respective application.

The Professor also arms himself with that passage in the 25th Psalm, ver. 10 - "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." On the contrary side it will be said, that the abstract part of the proposition must have a general operation;

although in this place specially applied. Another text of scripture is brought up, that in Hebrews 11:6 - “He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” It will be answered, that this truth presumes the possibility of the use, and of the abuse of moral freedom. There is yet another text — Psalm 17:26— “With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure:” And this the writer presumes essential to the justice of God. If so, it must be on a principle, which

extends further than would have been allowed.

The reasoning of Professor Witsius is also worthy of notice. He is answering Twiss; whom he calls a great divine; and who, he says, had many followers. In order to show the unreasonableness of the opinion entertained by this divine, Witsius argues thus—"Is it becoming the most holy and thrice excellent God, to say to his holy creature—Look upon me as thy chief good; but know I neither am, nor shall be such to thee. Long after me; but on condition

over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?" And yet it is difficult to perceive, how they could evade such an argument, otherwise than by the interpretation given of the passage in the former part of this work, as affecting the condition of man, not in eternity, but in time. Much indeed may justly be said, of the caution and the reverence with which we should reason concerning the ways of God to man; and of the danger of error from our imperfect views of them.

the ends of the moral government of God, to remember, that "clouds and darkness are round about him;" yet we may answer to all theories, contradicting the primary truths gathered by sober reason from the contemplation of his works, that "Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his seat."

2. OF REDEMPTION.

*Import of the
Term—Arminian side
adopted—Texts expressive
of Universality—Of the
same, without mentioning
Sacrifice for Sin— Texts of
Invitation— Of
expostulation—Of
Promise and
Threatening—Making
especial Mention of the
World—Which excite to
the Imitation of
God—Expressive of being
within the Covenant—Of
temporal Mercies—Of
Spiritual—The whole*

applied.

FROM a subject, which the word of God has not cleared of the clouds and darkness thrown on it by the circumstances of our condition, the attention is now invited to another; that of a truth, as luminous as the region from which it has descended to bless mankind.

The very name of the history of Redemption—the Gospel, that is, Good News—carries with it a confutation of all theories, erected on the foundation of the doctrine of a

of the hearers, were incapacitated for the acceptance of it; and that the call, although made on every individual, in such a manner as implies him to be personally contemplated, was nevertheless, with there being a circumstance understood, the existence or the want of which would render the call effectual or the contrary? These are the very matters affirmed to have been taught by the Apostles, to persons in the circumstances here supposed; who, however, do not appear to have

“denying the Lord that bought them,” [2Pet. 2:1] and yet, “bringing on themselves swift destruction.” These teachers had been characterized as “false,” and as “bringing in damnable heresies;”, and “destruction” is the fruit of their doings.” Of this text, as in several other instances, Dr. Doddridge gives an interpretation, amounting to that of those who dissent from him in his system.

It is but fair, to record the usual interpretation of Calvinistick writers, of the

texts which have been cited. According to them, by “all the world” and “all men,” is meant a select number from all the people of the world, of different times, places and circumstances of condition. And they who are said to have been bought by the Lord, and yet to have perished, have the former affirmed of them, because they bore the appearance to others of being of the number of the faithful. The former of these interpretations is applied to other texts, intended to be cited.

There is a very explicit passage in Titus 2:11, to which the grammatical construction gives a much stronger sense, than that found in the text of the common translation, although the margin has done justice to the original. The exact order of Greek words dictates the following order to the English — “There has appeared the grace of God, bringing salvation unto all men.” The advocates of the opposite system, so far as is known to him who writes, have no way of rendering the text conformable to

The class of texts which shall occupy the next place, as seeming the most nearly allied to that which has gone before, are those in which salvation by Christ appears in the same form of universality, but without especial mention of his sacrifice for sin. Thus it is said; "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." [*John 3:16*] And again it is said, in the next verse — "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the

excluded, would seem from the low sense in that case to be given to the species of mercy spoken of, which would be merely the preservation of the wicked by the providence of God, with a view to and for the greater aggravation of the approaching judgment, drawing nigh to them in consequence of his predestination.

The passage the last quoted, and that immediately before it, have been grossly misrepresented by Beza, in his translation of the New Testament. He renders

[*GREEK*] not servator
[Saviour] but conservator
[preserver.] And he has
taken a similar liberty with
another passage, that of
Hebrews x. 38, which is
here mentioned, not as
applying to the present
subdivision of the subject,
but as associated with the
other texts by Dr.
Campbell. In Hebrews
10:38, Beza translates.
[*"my soul shall have no
pleasure in him "non est
gracum animo meo."*] "It
is not agreeable to my
mind." What makes the
license of Beza the more
striking, is the position in

of opinions: and he supposes, that the translator would have adhered to servator, if it had not been to get rid of the difficulty, in the clause, “especially of those that believe.” The reason given by Beza in his notes, for the freedoms which have been specified, are here conceived to be so evidently insufficient, as greatly to aggravate the impropriety of such conduct. His motive for altering “Saviour” to “Preserver,” is, that the former word being commonly applied to the subject of eternal life

through Christ, he altered it to avoid an homonymy; thus presuming, that it meant another matter in this place; which is the very point in question. In the next passage, he compares the expression— “Would have all men to be saved,” to its being said, Matthew 4:23, and elsewhere, that our Lord healed “all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease, among the people.” But there seems no ground for this comparison: because the varied forms of expression from St. Matthew, give the same sentiment; whereas,

of its being said, like those already quoted, to have been copied into modern translations of the bibles of Calvinistick churches. It is [Acts 14:23] [GREEK WORDS] — in English, “when they had ordained them elders;” which, to favor popular election, he has translated: “Quumque ipsi per suffragia creassent presbyteros;” that is, “when they had made presbyters by holding up hands” [significative of choice] Dr. Campbell says—“Though no man is more an enemy of

revealed, offer life and death; the former, no otherwise to be had, than through his subsequent redemption. Thus, when Moses admonished the children of Israel—“Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God; and a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day;” *[Deut. 11:26]* it ought not to be supposed of the Divine Being—it ought not to be

non-acceptance of this were to be followed by such an effect?

There might, in addition, be enumerated texts of admonition, texts of exhortation, and texts of censure: But they are so numerous, that the mere mentioning of these properties cannot but recall instances to every mind, in any considerable degree conversant in the Scriptures. But let there be every chance of justice to the objection brought from the other side, against the present application of them. And the objection

shall be, that of Calvin himself. He says— “When he” (that is God) “addresses the same word to the reprobates, though it produces not their correction, yet he makes it effectual for another purpose, that they may be confounded by the testimony of their consciences now, and be rendered more inexcusable at the day of judgment.”

[Book 2, chap. 5. sect. 5]

Texts of promise and threatening might also be added to the account. But they so abound, that to specify a few of them might

have the effect of detracting from their weight in mass. Here also the answer of Calvin demands admittance, as found in the passage quoted from him. They are supposed to be for the punishment of offenders in the pains of conscience. The obvious reply is, that the effect of Calvin's system is to release from the pains of conscience; these not existing, without the conviction of the commission of crime which might have been avoided; or the omission of duty that might have been

performed.

There has been mentioned a class of texts, which unequivocally affirm the universality of the mediatorial relation to mankind. But there may be made a distinct class, of such as affirm indeed the same universality, but make it more pointed, by an especial mention of the world: which must, in reason, be interpreted of the whole and not a part of it. Thus, we read of a “propitiation for the sins of the whole world:” [*1 John 2:2*] of “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin

of the world:" *[John 1:29]* of "the bread of God that giveth life to the world:" *[John 6:33]* and "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved:" *[John 3:17]* with many passages to the same effect. This is language, not seeming to accord with that of dying for the elect only. They who hold the latter are cautious of committing themselves, and of raising what they think ill grounded expectations in their hearers, by holding out such ample declarations of

incite us to be like him in doing good to the unthankful and the evil; [*Matthew 5:45*] to the being “partakers of his holiness;” [*Hebrews 12:10*] and to be “partakers of the divine nature.” [*2 Peter 1:4*] A moral resemblance of God is universally allowed by Christians to be the perfection of man: But with what reason on the Calvinistick scheme, unless justice and benevolence are properties of a quite different nature, as existing in the one and in the other?

There may also be alleged all those texts, which

save sinners: I am of that description: he therefore died to save me: and how then shall I escape if I neglect so great salvation?"

But on the contrary system, it would seem that he cannot be required to believe what may not be true. The thing, if true, is so only on the condition of his being of the number of the elect. Accordingly the requisition, as applied to him, cannot be more than of faith, with the reservation of his being within the terms. And if he should be beyond them, it is difficult to conceive, how

the not believing of what is not true, can be made to aggravate his condemnation.

It is very common, with those who deny the universality of redemption, to make their appeal to

John 10:15 — “I lay down my life for the sheep.” But who were the identical sheep spoken of? Not all the elect; because the blessed speaker says immediately after— “Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold.” Therefore these were not among the persons spoken of before. Our Lord had a definite

object in his view, consisting of some of those present at his discourse: and it was to his purpose to describe the opposition of character between them, and others by whom he had been rejected. His saying, under this limited view of his subject, that he died for some, is not a denial that he died for all: otherwise, it might be proved from Galatians 2:20, that he died for none besides St. Paul; who says — “I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” It is not here unknown, that even this

passage has been brought in proof of the partiality of redemption. With little less reason, some bring the passages which predicate redemption of the church, as “Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.” [*Eph. 5:25*] But besides the irrelevancy already noticed, this and every similar text is in direct opposition to the system which they are brought to sustain. Calvinists, in their ideas of the “church,” consent with their opponents in saying, that in it, “the evil are mingled with the good.” Some indeed have adopted

the phantasy of an invisible church, consisting of holy and virtuous persons only: but this is not the social body, spoken of by the apostle. In regard to other texts brought together with the same view, who knows not, that a truth applying universally, may occasionally be recognized in its relation to some portion of the whole?

Independently on the sense of the enumerated texts, intimating that Christ died for all, that salvation is offered to all, that the scriptures invite all, and that faith is required of all;

chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.” It would be easy to multiply such evidences of the honour, with which the church hath been adorned by her divine head; and that not only about the time of her establishment, but many ages before, by the mouths of the prophets, when in vision they contemplated her with a holy rapture. That she should be like a field, in which the wheat should be encumbered with the tares; and like a net, enclosing fishes good and bad; is indeed revealed in

terms not to be mistaken. But that men should be invited into this holy association; not only invited, but actually vested with all its privileges, as authoritatively as the truth of God can warrant; and yet be of the number of those, for whom there is not, and never was, any sacrifice for sin; and who no farther differ from the apostate angels, “reserved in chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day,” than in being a disfigurement of that church, of which it is nevertheless said, that

“Christ gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing;” seems one of the most manifest incongruities, with which the divine word can be impeached. Not only ecclesiastical privileges, but temporal mercies are to the point pleaded for: that is, what are usually considered as temporal mercies, if they ought indeed to be esteemed such; if there is to be held a debt of gratitude due on their account; and if they are not a dole, dealt out to aggravate

purpose of rendering them inexcusable. According to this, there is no exception from the general observation.]

of God to suppose, that he would thus put forth his holy energy, without intending to complete its work, unless resisted by the person to be benefitted? It is said, that all mankind incurred damnation, by the sin of Adam: May not then the object of the divine decree be supposed to have been accomplished, by a breach of the alleged covenant of works, without

the Christian, to set up the claim of merit, in any shape; or to imagine himself possessed of gifts, other than such as flow from God's free, though not discriminating grace. But can it be thought, that Calvin's view of the subject is correct, in distinguishing between the persons and the gifts? Our blessed Saviour says—"Your Father shall reward you openly;" [*Matt. 6:4*] and, "He shall reward every man according to his works." [*16:27*] St. Paul says of Moses—"He had respect unto the recompense of the

perfections. When we listen to him saying—"Give me thine heart;" let not there be wanting a ground of the exacted tribute of affection. When he says—"If I be a father, where is mine honour;" let there be found in us such a conviction of paternal right, as shall make the motive operative. And when we read, that he will finally "judge the world in righteousness;" let us conceive of this attribute, as also governing in the preparatory dispensation of the gospel. Yes, great Creator and Preserver! Thou hast told us, that thou

3. OF FREEWILL

*Doctrine of Imputation
and a Covenant —
Radical Corruption of
Nature — Texts —
Oneness of the Church in
all ages — What Christ
said of Infants — View of
the Apostasy —
Consequences of opposite
Theory — Objections
guarded against.*

*[There may be propriety
in again mentioning what
was said under this point,
in the first department of
the work, on the term*

freewill. It has been considered as inaccurate; because the will, in respect to external force, cannot but be free. Accordingly, the word is here considered as expressive of what the Greeks called [GREEK WORD], or a power inherent to the mind.]

There should be here remembered the particular in which the parties are agreed; and the two particulars in which they differ. The former is, the utter inability of man as to recovery from the apostasy;

stands in the 24th chapter of Exodus, when Moses sprinkled the blood and said—"Behold, the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you." That these covenants were not only for Abraham and the Israelites respectively, but for their posterities also, is certain; and it is especially declared in the former instance by the rite of circumcision, which was the sign of the covenant in the flesh; not only in the person of Abraham, but in his seed after him. This covenant, however, respected peculiar

have been all the felicity which might have been allotted to him, but the effect of pure grace—of the same grace, which had brought himself, and all the fair creation surrounding him, into being?

Where is the record—where is the hint given of this covenant? The writer of this could never find a single text alleged to the effect; unless by applying to it what is said of the covenant in the law of Moses. This indeed has been introduced, with a view to the subject; and allusion has been made to

human interpretation into the form of a covenant, it is natural to demand the authority for such a procedure. And when it is with the view to raise from it a theory, that is to have an influence on every branch of theological inquiry; it becomes a matter of immense moment, to set oft satisfactorily from the beginning point.

But with the supposed character of Adam and the covenant, there is another principle connected; of which no evidence, so far as the writer of this knows, is

even attempted. It is, that if Adam had persevered in innocency, it would have availed, not for himself only, but also for his posterity. This does not follow from the nature of a covenant. In that with Abraham and his seed, any individual of them might lose the benefit, as it respected himself. If, as the doctrine of Calvin confesses, it was left to Adam's self either to fall or to persevere, analogy points to the inference, that, even in the event of his perseverance, the same liberty would have attached

would approve. The professor intends an addition to his argument, by going on to remark, that no descendant of Adam can assuredly know, whether, in the same circumstances, he would not have done the same. “Dost thou,” says this author, “most iniquitous censurer of the ways of the Lord, boast thou wouldest have better used thy freewill? Nay, on the contrary, all thy actions cry aloud, that thou approvest, that thou art highly pleased with, and always takest example from “that deed of thy first parent, about

the imputation of the sin of Adam, supposed to be taught in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

[Verse 12 and following]
Although it is hoped, that this passage has been explained in the former part of the work; yet, as it is the only place in scripture usually alleged for the establishment of the doctrine, there may be a use in so far recurring to the subject, as to obtain a comprehensive view of the arguments which prove, that the Calvinistick opinion cannot be the

There is not a particle of record to this effect. Let the matter be supposed designed of the universality of mortality through Adam; and then the Apostle presumes nothing, but what would be admitted by every Jew; and the reasoning founded on such conceded fact, is pertinent and conclusive.

3dly. The interpretation intended to support the opinion, leads to consequences not admitted by its advocates; and therefore avails them nothing. The extent of the benefit by Christ, is

evidently affirmed to equal, and even to surpass, as is thought generally, that of the loss through Adam. But this can be true, only on the supposition of mortality as the loss, and of the contrary as the benefit. The words alluded to are in the 18th and 19th verses.

4thly. The same opinion educes from the passage a sense too far wide as well of reason as of fact, to be owned by either side. For when it is said—"Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's

very strong expression used, that of reigning over them. There is no getting over this difficulty, but by supposing the word death to undergo an entire change of meaning, between the 12th verse and the 14th. And here let it be noted by the way, that, in the intermediate verse, the only passage brought from scripture to prove the imputation of the sin of Adam to his posterity, the word imputation is used as expressive of the charging of the guilt of the sins of men upon themselves; while there is no

to favor the doctrine of imputation, are where it is said, in verse 12 (according to the marginal reading, here acknowledged to be correct) “In whom all have sinned;” and in verse 19, “many were made sinners.” To counteract the application of these clauses, an instance was given of the same manner of expression in 1 Kings 1:21. But professor Witsius finds fault with Grotius, for quoting that passage to the same effect; and says [*Book 1. chap. 8. sect. 34*] that Bathsheba did not there mean the undergoing of

punishment without fault, but the being found guilty of a treasonable aiming at the kingdom. There is nothing in the passage, to justify this construction. David had designated his son Solomon, to the inheritance of the crown. In the yet unsettled state of the monarchy, it does not appear that there was any constitutional principle opposed to this; and on the contrary, the design of the king had the divine sanction. Had Adonijah reigned, Bathsheba and Solomon would not have been rebels; but she had

otherwise. He urges — and is supported by the Septuagint, that the Greek word sometimes signifies “a sacrifice for sin.” Yet it is applied in a stronger way here; although by a figure, founded on that idea. In the passage, believers are called, not merely “righteous,” but “the righteousness of God in Christ.” Accordingly, to complete the contrast, Christ must be considered (figuratively) as not merely “a sinner,” but “sin.”

The same author supposes an insipid tautology in the

race were less marked by benefit, than by infliction. The former may be abridged without injustice; and even to the highest praise of the divine benignity, if the end to be accomplished should bear the impression of that attribute, as is here supposed to be the case. Now, let it be considered to what point tend all the speculations concerning a covenant of works, and the imputation of Adam's sin. It is for the purpose of accommodating the whole system of theology, to the eternal damnation of all

they appeal to human sense, in contradiction of the Roman Catholick interpretation of our Lord's words, in the institution of the Eucharist. The words, literally taken, are decisive for the opinion which Protestants reject. But they say, that this is over-ruled by the evidence of sense; and that therefore, the command should be interpreted on other grounds, contended to be reasonable in themselves, and in analogy with other passages of scripture. Let it be here remarked, what extravagance would result,

were there admitted the principle, that whatever in scripture is descriptive of man should be interpreted strictly, without reference to general fact on one hand, and to the particular purpose of the writer on the other. Thus, when Abraham describes man as being “but dust and ashes;” [*Genesis 18:27* such a saying might prove him destitute of an immortal spirit. The same doctrine, might be deduced from what is said by the divine Being in *Genesis 6:3* — “My spirit shall not always strive with man; for that he also is

and cast his throne down to the ground.” For “glory” we have “brightness” in the margin; and it might have been “cleanness,” with as much propriety as there is put “a clean thing” in the place in question. The word translated “unclean” has its root in the other word; and is the contrary to it.

There is urged, to the present point, another quotation from the same book — “How then can man be justified with God? Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?” [*Job 25:4*] Moral purity, as pertaining to man, is not

opinions which he delivers. In the speeches of the three friends of Job, there is certainly much brilliant and instructive sentiment: They are however reproved for having uttered some rash opinions, before the conclusion of the book.

What shall be said of Psalm 51:5— “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” The answer is — Let it be acknowledged, and not without deep sensibility of the danger of our condition on this account, that our earliest recollection may show us, how continually

it was under a continual liability to evil. Every man who contrasts human sinfulness and imperfection with the purity and the perfection of the divine law, will be ready to say the same of his own heart: And there is no contradiction of this, in the argument of the present work. To construe the abovementioned words of the psalmist, without regard to the considerations here advanced, would be as unreasonable as to make the same use of what he says in another place —

absurdity, if taken according to the letter. For how can a man have “gone astray and spoken lies,” from the early period referred to? There is another instance to the purpose, where it is said — “Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother’s breasts.” [*Psalm 22:9*] Such a passage comes under the name of a Hebraism.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked:” says the prophet Jeremiah, adding — “Who can know it?” [*17:9*] And this has

been thought pertinent to the present subject. There can be no doubt of the wickedness, to which the heart of every man is liable: And if we were to doubt that guilty passion may wear deceitful appearances to the man who cherishes it in his bosom, we might be put to shame by the importance with which even the heathen sages have clothed the precept — “Know thyself.” But that this passage has in view the hearts of all men, may well be questioned. Not long before, there are denounced, by the mouth

and according to the fruit of his doings.”

The following text has been thought to involve the sentiment in question: “Foolishness” (confessedly another name for wickedness) “is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.” [*Prov. 22:15*] It might have been supposed, that the passage has nothing to do with the season of life, too early for the rod of correction to be applied to it. But in, truth, the original word, [נער] though applicable to

men” and even “young women,” embraces the sense of the very earliest period of life; the same is as applicable to the passage in Kings, as to that in Proverbs. The Greek word which describes an infant strictly speaking, is used by St. Paul where he tells Timothy — “From a child [*2 Tim. 3:15*] thou hast known the holy scriptures. Did the Apostle mean, that Timothy had been instructed in the scriptures, while at the breast? By no means. But he left to the sense of propriety, to determine the precise

these terms should be thought explained by Colossians 1:21. where it is added — “By wicked works:” which shows, that something distinct from the condition of birth is the matter intended. But those names, as they occur in the epistles of St. Paul, cannot be understood, without regard had to the difference of the state of the Gentiles, from that of the Jews; and the Apostle’s identifying of himself with the former, as their Apostle. Perhaps, the most remarkable instance of the two principles in connexion, is in the epistle

to the Ephesians; the passages of which, relative to the present point, shall be here explained, agreeably to the sentiment entertained, for the purpose of illustrating the property affirmed to belong to the writings of St. Paul.

Having spoken of “the dispensation of the fulness of times,” [1:10] in which God was to “gather together in one all things in Christ,” the Apostle adds—“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance;” meaning we Christians of the church of Rome, from whence the epistle was

written. He goes on, soon afterwards — “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth;” *[v13]* that is, ye Christians of the church of Ephesus. The Apostle, after displaying through the whole chapter the excellency of the Gospel and the dignity of the person of Christ, says, in the first verse of the next chapter— “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of

making of both one, by him who is our peace; “having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace. And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.” [2:14-17] The sacred penman winds up what is pertinent to the present purpose, with the following inference — “Now,

therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” *[v19]*

It would seem, that there is here drawn a marked distinction of character between the Gentiles and the Jews, before their respective reception of the Gospel. The former were “the children of wrath even as others:” not as all others, but as the Roman Gentiles, from among whom the epistle was written. These converts had been, collectively speaking, in the condition described above.

On the contrary, the converts from among the Jews had been of “the commonwealth of Israel they had possessed “the covenants of promise;” they had been provided with a ground “of hope;” and, considered as a people owned by God, they had been “with him in the world:” their legal economy having directed their attention to a better, by which it was now to be superseded, after having answered all the purposes of a covenant state, so long as its obligation lasted.

Besides such passages as

serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.” Now to show how far this is from being intended as a description of human nature, it will be sufficient to remark, that St. Paul never applies such language to the natural condition of the Jews. Else, what shall we make of that in which he says— “We who are Jews by nature” (meaning natural condition) “and not sinners of the Gentiles.” [*Gal. 2:15*] Or of that in which he says — “Men and brethren, I

The sense of them is sufficiently supported by the fact, that idolatry, with all its attendant licentiousness, had very much abounded among the converts from heathenism to Christianity. The same Apostle, indeed, in his epistle to the Romans, charges the Jewish community with the like corruption in practice, as that of the heathen. . Still, when we descend from the collective capacity to the individual, the Jew was distinguished from the heathen in this, that the former was owned of the

translation—"That ye may not do." The contrariety just before affirmed is considered as tending to this effect; instead of the Apostle's being represented as establishing it by inference. But besides, the idea of the applicability of the passage to the Christian state is guarded against, both in the verse going before and in that following. "This I say then" (so begins the Apostle) "walk in the spirit; and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." Then comes in the contrariety of principles, in the passage

under consideration. After which there follows — “If ye be led by the spirit ye are not under the law,” that is, under its condemning power. And then follows a black catalogue of the lusts of the flesh; of which and the like “I tell you before,” says the Apostle, “as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” This whole passage may be considered as an illustration of that in the Romans; and the united force of both, is the giving of a view of contending

principles in man, as he is by nature; and the ascendancy of the one or the other of which, constitutes his character.

Another passage is in 1 Corinthians 2:14—“The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God.” Certainly not: but it is evident that “the natural man” is a sensual person, or one under the dominion of his sensitive nature. This man has no sensibility to the things of God: but what is such a sentiment, to the purpose for which it is adduced?

To the above passage and

people, he calls them “carnal,” because of prevailing attachments of different persons to their respective favorite ministers. Now, although this merited apostolick censure and correction; yet, being addressed to them who were “sanctified in Christ Jesus,” it must have been compatible with a measure of grace determining the Christian character, although under manifest imperfection. Otherwise, the Apostle addresses them in terms not applicable to them. Besides which, lamentable

must be the condition of innumerable persons in every age, who have manifested the same weakness; not without similar evidence of sincerity, although doubtless in alliance with great defalcation from what the spirit of their holy religion calls for. The expression of “God’s being manifest in the flesh,” with other like sayings concerning our Lord, might have exempted the word from the charge of its denoting an assemblage of properties essentially corrupt. And indeed, if,

under the great variety of meaning, making it necessary to attend to circumstances in each place, it often stands for sinful propensity, without attachment or alloy; this is a use naturally resulting from the evident fact, that our flesh or mortal nature is the part of us in which sin principally manifests its dominion: which very matter rather opposes than confirms the sentiment, that our whole nature is radically sinful.

Of the theory here objected to, there has been supposed an indirect proof,

powers? Such an extravagant supposition is not made by any. Similar to this new birth in heaven, is that of Christianity on earth; in which the affections and the appetites remain substantially the same; although the former are directed to higher objects; and the latter are regulated, not by sensual gratification, but by Christian ends. In short man, as born of Adam, has a mere animal life: but as born again in Christ, he has, under the operation of the Holy Spirit, a life of righteousness in the world,

which can belong only to the Spirit of God.

There is a large class of texts, which it is common to bring against such sentiments as those contained in the present treatise; even all which represent salvation as not attainable, but through Christ and the merits of his death—For “there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved” [*Acts 4:12*] — “Who gave himself a ransom for all” [*1 Tim. 2:6*] and — “he is the propitiation for our sins.” [*1 John 6:10*] God forbid

lost to them, and they have inherited from him a diseased nature. Immortality can be regained by them only by Christ, who “hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light.” Their nature is sanctified by the possession of grace bestowed in baptism: a grace which if improved, is sufficient for the exigences of future life; and therefore sufficient to prepare them for early death. Let it be remembered, that only the infants of Christian parents are spoken of, because of their case only, the

diverse from the present. The Socinian doctrine is here alluded to; which supposes that Adam would have died, had he not sinned; that his death has no effect on the condition of his posterity; that there was no original righteousness in paradise; and that there is no moral pollution inherent to man at present. These, and the like opinions, are not the sense of the author of this work; and therefore he finds himself under no obligation of noticing objections, which have no bearing on the one,

that with this agrees the original word, which may denote persons of this description. The scope of the passage requires this construction: for our Lord, to reprove the aspiring thoughts of his disciples, had taken an infant strictly speaking, as the original word denotes: and yet with this it was a natural coincidence, to deliver a lesson against the contempt of inferiors, and of persons of ordinary estimation. The blessed speaker, however, still keeps the stage of infancy within his view: for when

as much negative harmlessness, as the human infant; and yet it would hardly have been thought in point, to have made the former the medium of the instruction.

The other passage is in the 19th chapter, verse 14, —“Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

In St. Mark 10:15, it is added — “Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”

The Christian church in general, considers the

precept as a warrant for infant baptism. Why then should any part of that church sever the precept from the reason given for it — that the kingdom of heaven is of such? meaning not surely in ignorance, but in innocency. And why should there be overlooked the remark in which the whole ends, that the kingdom of God must be received by others, in like manner as by them? meaning, doubtless, with their sincerity and want of guile. How low a representation of this transaction does it suppose,

read of this description, falls under one or another of the following heads—temporal death and its attendant ills — loss of original righteousness — imputation of the sin of Adam — and hereditary corruption.

The first is death with its attendant ills; meaning of bodily pain and susceptibility of injury from the elements; which would end, if there were no other dispensation of God to man, in the extinction of his being. It is the grace of God, through Christ, that puts him on a new

passage of scripture which says — “God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.” [*Eccl. 7:29*]

The third, is the imputation of Adam’s sin, of which the author, having rejected the doctrine altogether, would say no more, were he not desirous of guarding against some misstatement of the doctrine, as if it were merely guilt charged because of hereditary depravity. Accordingly, that there may be a distinct idea of the matter spoken of, it is thus defined, and the

misstatement alluded to is guarded against by professor Turretine —

“If it be only so, that the sin of Adam is said to be imputed to us mediately, because we are constituted guilty by God and are made obnoxious to punishment, because of the hereditary corruption which we draw from Adam; there will not be properly any imputation of the sin of Adam, but only of an inherent stain * * * *. We teach, that the actual sin of Adam is so in itself

imputed to all descending from him in the ordinary way, that, because of it, all are reckoned guilty, and all may be punished, or at least may be accounted worthy of punishment.”

[Locus 9. sect. 35]

Of the remaining particular—derived corruption—the author will deliver his sentiments; such, as he conceives to have been gathered by him from scripture. Man, in his innocency, was so far from being under a covenant of works, that it was a

have been made perpetual.

Adam fell; and by this event he incurred responsibility to the threatening—"Dying thou shalt die;" that is, "have thy being extinguished by a return to the earth, out of which it was created." The same was incurred for his posterity, if any were to proceed from him: for it cannot be gathered from the narrative, whether death might not have been made to do its work more agreeably to the letter of the threatening, had not the new dispensation of a Restorer intervened.

common systems of
ethicks, is divided into our
duty to God, and our duty
to our neighbour:
comprehending, under
either or both, whatever
relates to the proper
government of ourselves.

In regard to God, he who
writes never knew an
instance, in which, there
being proposed to the mind
of a young person, the idea
of such a being, with the
perfections usually
ascribed to him, the result
was hatred; or even
anything short of
admiration and esteem.
There have been so many

instances within his observation, of its proving a theme dwelt on with delight, that he is warranted in believing it a general trait of the youthful character; although the contrary may sometimes happen; to be accounted for by an extraordinary association of ideas; the effect either of mistake in education, or the neglect of it. That the young mind may afterwards become indisposed to the contemplation of the same adorable Being; and may even become so far depraved, as never to think

of him but with disgust; and for ought here known with hatred, although not met with in any instance, is conceded. But this may be traced to the prevalence of inordinate desire, in some shape or in another; which prompts the consciousness, that the great Creator and Preserver cannot be thought of, without self-reproach.

We also owe to God, the proper government of ourselves, Now, it will not be denied, that all passions to the contrary are desires, innocent and useful as implanted in the

regard to both these laws of honesty and of truth, there seem to be no instances, in which young persons, properly instructed, more directly assent to their obligations, and manifest a disposition to the practice of them; however they may lose sight of them in succeeding life, through the influence of temptation. But when there is annexed the condition of proper instruction, there is implied consistent example of the instructor. Even if some instances, to the contrary of what is stated, may come within the experience of

others; yet, if the general fact be agreeable to the former, it is sufficient to the argument. As there are monsters in the natural world, there may, perhaps, be something analogous in the moral; although it is here doubted.

But if there be correctness in what has been laid down as a property of very early years; how happens it, that young persons are so often and so easily drawn aside, to selfishness and injustice? It is from a growing acquaintance with their present, and with what may be their future

interference with the acquiring or the retaining of what is made desirable, by real or imaginary wants, that men cherish feelings so inimical to others and so tormenting to themselves. And uniting with such a series of unsocial passions, there is the misdirection of that noble ardour of the mind, which was given to excite it to laudable and useful enterprise. For although one end of this endowment is esteem; yet, combining with ignoble principles of conduct, it defeats its own end, by deeds which deserve

accomplished—that victory which the Apostle, after describing the conflict in the sinner’s breast, mentions as the achievement of Christian faith; and which consists in being delivered “from the body of this death.” Without this, there would not apply what he says of glorying in the fruit of such a victory— “There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.”

When there is contemplated the theory

the sentiment, in its extent— “If every soul be subject to all these monstrous vices, as the Apostle fearlessly pronounces, we clearly see what would be the consequence, if the Lord should suffer the human passions to go all the lengths to which they are inclined.

There is no furious beast, that would be agitated with such ungovernable rage; there is no river, though ever so rapid and violent, that would overflow its boundaries with such impetuosity. In his elect,

the Lord heals these maladies, by a method which we shall hereafter describe. In others, he restrains them, only to prevent their ebullitions so far as he sees to be necessary for the preservation of the universe. Hence, some by shame, and some by fear of the laws, are prevented from running into many kinds of pollutions, though they cannot in any great degree dissemble their impurity: others, because they think that a virtuous course of life is advantageous, entertain

doing this, they change the meaning of the latter term, which is of well-known signification in theology, expressive of a sound truth; that of the grace of God going before, us in all good, and disposing to it. The expression, “restraining grace,” may also be correctly used, although not in the sense here alluded to. That the holy spirit of God, by suggesting salutary sentiment to the mind, may keep a man back from an action which he wickedly wills to do, may be conceived of. This however is not the thing, which the

consent to the sin in paradise? Hence, to all appearance, arose the necessity of introducing the novelty of an imputation, by the just judgment of God, of a sin committed by representation. It is only thus that an infant can, with any appearance of consistency, be affirmed to be guilty as soon as it is born; or, to use the more consistent words of bishop Beveridge, as soon as it is conceived; because, consent to a former sin by imitation requires the exercise of the intellectual faculty.

It is with the most profound reverence, that there is submitted the following intimation concerning the person of the adorable Redeemer, as connected with the present subject. It has frequently pressed on the mind of the author; and he thinks, that the withholding of it would not be consistent with the justice due to the sacred cause of truth. That in the person of Jesus, the divine nature was united with the human—not body only, but soul also, is the faith of Christians generally; and the excluding of the human

soul, is stigmatized as the heresy of the Apollinarians. But is it consistent with this doctrine, to conceive of the soul of fallen man, essentially such as the Calvinistick theory describes it? This objection had seemed important to the author, before he found in his reading anything in any author, which had a bearing on the point. Nor did he meet with any notice of it, until his reading of Witsius; whose answer, he must say, has much confirmed him in the conviction of the insuperable nature of the

difficulty proposed. This author, considering the matter in relation to imputation only, has some minute distinctions, not necessary to be repeated; and all turning on the point, that the second Adam was not born according to the ordinary course of nature; but in virtue of the promise of the seed of the woman. Notwithstanding this, however, there are the declarations in scripture, that he “took on him the seed of Abraham;” that “in all things he was made like unto his brethren;” and

under all its essential properties.

There is another impression on the author's mind on the present subject, like the consideration introduced above, affecting the divine character. He allude, to the asseverations in scripture, that man, not only as to his original state, but as to his present also, is in the image of God. Thus, the reason given against the taking of human life, is—"In the image of God made he man." [*Genesis 9:6*] And it is said by St. James concerning a licentious

tongue— “Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.” [Ch. 3:9] Are these things consistent with the idea, that we have lost all traces of the divine image; and, as some divines do not scruple to affirm, are by nature in the likeness of the devil?

[Even the last opinion is not always thought to reach the tone of orthodoxy. For the writer of this, at a very early period of his life, heard of a very popular Calvinistick

being destined to be in future, in the image of his Creator. The mere possibility is adverted to; because, according to the theory, the argument against the murder of any man would be, that for ought known to the murderer, the other may be one of those, who are to bear the image of God on their souls.

There have been mentioned some difficulties, the solutions of which are not commonly attempted by Calvinistick writers. But there is one difficulty, which they often

then, to be evidence of the extremities to which the theory leads? It would seem, indeed, that the learned author, aware how inadequate some minds would be to the discovery of the consistency of his positions, provides for such occasions by remarking — “Though it be difficult, nay impossible for us, to reconcile these truths with each other; yet we ought not to deny what is manifest, on account of that which is hard to be understood.” Certainly not: but the principle does not apply, where—as is

thoughts and dispositions, as having pointed to everything hateful in the sight of God and man, we could not feel the pain of self-condemnation, for any excesses into which we may have fallen; or for any imperfections, in the performance of religious and moral duties. We might perhaps bewail the misery of such a nature, but could never be brought to any sensibility of the sin of it.

The author, however, is not without the apprehension, that his sentiments will be misunderstood and

is enmity against God;" and that "to be carnally minded is death." Not only so, the being in such a state poisons every performance, which might in itself be the subject of divine approbation. The sense entertained on this point, shall be illustrated by reference to a passage in Dr. Witherspoon's fourteenth lecture; in regard to which, the liberty is here taken of thinking the Doctor correct in part, but not entirely. He represents his theory as "by no means asserting, that every act" (of the

far right, as that the sinful state of man in question forbids the acceptance of an act, not partaking of the vicious properties of that state. But to say of the same man, that he cannot do any action in itself right, except from a wrong principle and with a view to a wrong end, seems a carrying of the matter beyond what observation warrants. The Doctor goes on to show, what he means by a wrong end and motive; instancing one man's being sober from a concern for his health; and another's being frugal, to fill his purse. But if even

mankind have a disease of nature; being sensible of sources of want, and surrounded by correspondent temptations, which change weakness into sin. Here is a cause, which will account for all prevalence of iniquity; any further than as it may be checked by opposite testimony from the works and from the word of God, in neither of which hath he left himself without a witness; by the consenting testimony of conscience to them both, and by their being all directed to their proper

4 OF GRACE.

The Arminian side taken—Texts declaring the general Tenor of the Christian Mission-Texts which make the Offer general—Texts which suppose the Possibility of Resistance—Texts on the other Side—Would prove the Influence of Satan irresistible—Unnecessary Consequence drawn by Calvinists - Consequences of the other Side—The question of Faith and Works—Distinction between absolute and

with an energy that is sovereign and irresistible. The Arminian knows of no saving grace, besides that given to all; which he considers as persuasive and to be resisted.

On the present point, the Arminian does not fail to remark, and he is in no danger of contradiction—that the more obvious sense of scripture is with him: its contents being generally spoken of, as interesting alike to all. And he argues from this, that if, in contrariety to offers explicitly made, and which

of scripture which they think applicable to their purpose, would be to transcribe a great part of the sacred volume. For they contend, that there is not an admonition, or an exhortation, or a reproof, or a precept, or a promise, or a threatening, but what is predicated on the truth of their opinion; and, independently on it, would be either deception or mockery: Deception, if the party interested were informed of the apparent benefit, but kept in ignorance of the drawback; and mockery, if, as is

participation of the inestimable privileges involved in it. In this sense, the foregoing comparison of the sealing of goods will apply as strictly, as if the matter intended had been the sealing of the individuals.

Similar to the expression here commented on, but indeed still stronger, is that in 1 Thessalonians 5:19—“Quench not the Spirit.” It matters not, whether his ordinary or his extraordinary influence be the subject of the precept. If there may be a defeat of his influence in this, more

evidently may it be in that. Again, there is a strong passage in Revelations 3:20—"Behold, I stand at the door and knock ; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me." It is well remarked by Calvinists and by others on this passage, that it puts off all pretence of anything being done by the will of man, without the grace of God preventing; that is, going before. But surely it teaches with equal clearness, that compliance or resistance rests with man. That the

omnipotence of God can accomplish what he wills, no one is hardy or foolish enough to deny. But whether it will or will not be exerted, according to the condition of the movement of the human will; and whether it may not have been his high pleasure, to establish the system of human affairs, on the principle of the affirmative ; is another subject. Such a system is consistent with the proposition laid down before, and is evidently the leading sentiment, of the passage under notice.

It will hardly be denied,

Father of Lights;” that in 1 Corinthians 4:7— “Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?” And to go from grace generally, to the most prominent fruit of it—“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. [*Ephesians 2:8*] In regard to all such passages, the answer is, that no question is raised, as to who is the author of all good. The difference is, as to the manner in which it is bestowed by him. It would be improper, however, to

dismiss the last of the passages mentioned, without noticing the violence offered to grammar, in order to bring it to bear on the question; so as to prove the point of the irresistible grace of God. That faith may be said to be his gift, as well because of its objects, as because of his grace inclining to it, is not denied. And yet, even this is not the sentiment of the passage. The word “it,” in the original, cannot be made to agree in gender with “faith.” Its antecedent, therefore, is the whole

preceding part of the sentence—the being “saved by grace through faith.” It is this which is the gift of God. Neither will there be any inconsistency with the interpretation, in what follows— “not of works,” &c.— “for we are his workmanship.” Grace was the principle in the divine mind, and workmanship was the grace carried into effect. But there is thus brought into view an expression, thought to be pointedly characteristick of the irresistible grace of God; since what can look more like the effect of

mechanical process, than the being a workmanship? And yet, to call so, a collective body of Christians, was no more than had been said relative to the community of the Jews, in many places, as in Isaiah 43:1.—“Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel.” The polity of each was a divine work; and nothing further is contained in the expression; although it ought to be confessed equally the work of God; whenever the hearts of his people are such as he is

individually but collectively. The other point of view, is as exacting renovation of the heart. But there must be repeated a remark before made, on the impropriety of giving to scriptural metaphor an interpretation, that implies a production of new powers; while it is notorious, that the best of saints carry with them out of the world no other faculty, and no other capacity of any kind, than such as had been in it; the difference between a state of sin, and that of grace, being in the objects to

which the powers are directed.

The texts alluded to, are thought to derive great weight from those of another description, in which we are said to be “dead in trespasses and sins;” [*Eph. 2:1*] in analogy with which we are called on—“Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” [*v. 14*]. Does not this very passage show the danger of building doctrine on a strict adherence to the letter of metaphorical discourse? The same persons are asleep in one

expressly of the divine agency on the mind; and that, in a manner thought descriptive of omnipotence, exerting itself in the irresistible way in question. This is one of the points, on which the Calvinist is thought to find especial difficulty, in bringing passages which will apply. For this reason, he is induced to heap together texts, which speak of the grace of God in contradistinction from human power, and which his opponent claims as common to both systems; constantly alleging, that the

question is not of the grace of God, but of its overbearing influence. Accordingly, it is not here thought necessary, to advert to texts of that description. There are however two texts of another nature, and thought to go directly to the point; one in the Old, and the other in the New Testament. The former is in Jeremiah 20:7—"O Lord, thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed." But let the connexion be ascertained. The prophet had faithfully discharged his commission, but had

given to go “a prophet unto the nations,” [*Chap. 1:5*] the designated messenger had answered— “Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child.” [*Verse 6*] The Lord had replied— “Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak:” [*Verse 7*] and then it is added—“Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.” [*Verse 8*] Now Jeremiah, on receiving the ill usage recorded just before the words in

question, apprehends a failure of this promise; and discontentedly reminds his heavenly Master, of his first unwillingness to go on the errand; which, in his own estimation, had been unfruitful. His words, taken with the light thrown on them by the occasion, far from speaking the language of irresistible grace, are in opposition to it. For that doctrine affirms an over-ruling of the will: Whereas here is an over-ruling of the actions, in opposition to the will.

The text from the New Testament is in the 2d ch.

are adduced, as applicable to the present point, the passages which speak of mighty operations of the Holy Spirit; clearly appearing, from the connexion, to be intended of a miraculous agency, discernible by sense. Thus when it is said—“According to the working of his mighty power;” [*Eph. 1:9*] the same power is immediately afterwards described, as illustrating itself in the resurrection of Christ: So when we read—“He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the

circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles;" [*Gal. 2:8*] the mighty working must have been what appeared in "the demonstration of power," on which the apostolick preeminence was established. And no doubt, the like is the sense in Colossians 1:29 — "His working, which worketh in me mightily."

In regard to passages speaking of the operations of divine grace; there are none which wear the appearance of representing it to be irresistible, any more than will equally give

believe one irresistible, any more than the other. And yet it is to be supposed, that no intelligent Christian conceives of this, as applicable to the enemy of all goodness.

Although, therefore, it is a divine truth, and ever to be kept in view, both for caution and for consolation, that there is an influence of the Spirit of God on the hearts of men; yet it is to be considered of as suasive, and not over-ruling and irresistible. The contrary hypothesis supposes a man a mere machine; and prevents his

trying circumstances. It is within the memory of many, how much perfidy, and how much murder were the issue of it, on the frontiers of some parts of the present United States; in which the settlers, in other respects sober and orderly people, and making great profession of religion, considered unchristianized people as not entitled either to justice or to mercy.

[The fact I ere affirmed, was especially notorious in the year 1764; when people of the description here

of passion, but constituted a part of the religion of the people here referred to. It will not be rash to affirm, that something like this in principle, is to be discerned within the bounds of civil communities denominated Christian. This is remarked under full knowledge, that it is not always an accompaniment of the theory here opposed; but merely to incite the serious mind to the inquiry, whether, wherever the contrary is found, it be not from an association of Christian benevolence with a gloomy principle; which

country, that the matter of predestination (and the same would follow of whatever is necessarily connected with it) should not be indiscriminately inculcated. This seems the distinction of the heathen philosophers precisely. The divines spoken of were worthy men; and it was probably owing principally to them, that the Synod did not go to the lengths aimed at by Gomarus and others, and take the high ground of supralapsarian predestination.

Nevertheless, as scripture had been made the rule of

the decisions of the body, it is difficult to perceive any reason of the recommended reserve, which did not also extend to the locking up from the people, in an unknown tongue, of at least considerable portions of the scriptures. Calvin was more consistent than those English divines. As quoted in another part of this work, he thought the doctrine “should be published, that he who hath ears to hear may hear.”

[See Brandt's History.

appear to have been perceived by the eminent person from whom it takes its name. He endeavours, indeed, to guard against the consequence, by supposed conversion. But this idea is indefensible; not only because it has no authority in scripture, but because it contemplates a change, of which the being, supposed to undergo it, is utterly unsusceptible.

These remarks are far from being designed to intimate, that mere decorous deportment, in rising youth, is the whole which their Christian

Christian virtue; and no resolutions pointing to it, which at all promise to be effectual. Too often do many, who are within the Christian covenant, fall into sin in act; and further, many fall, if not into this, yet into that state of forgetfulness of God, which is in itself essentially sinful. Great reason is there to call on both these descriptions of persons, to repent and turn to God; and to “do works meet for repentance.” But this is a different matter from the species of conversion, here objected to; which is known

Although it seems proper to recur to the subject, yet much need not be said on it; the principal writer being St. Paul, whose meaning elsewhere may be opened by the same key, which unlocks it in the epistle to the Romans. He continually opposes to the observance of the law—including not only the ceremonial part, but also the moral, so far as it depended on positive institution—a faith, the ground of which had been established before the giving of the other; and which its institutions were

intended to sustain. But at the same time, faith was so far from being contrasted with moral virtue, that this was supposed to exist in the other, as its principle.

Of the other apostolick writers of epistles, St. James, St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, not one of them refers to an existing controversy on the subject, except in one place St. James, apparently for the purpose of guarding against an abuse which had been made of the doctrine of St. Paul. To counteract this, St. James affirms justification by works, and

not by faith only; evidently using the words in senses quite wide of those in the writings of his co-apostle. With this exception of checking error, it seems that the apostles generally had left the dispute so interesting to the converted Gentiles, to their peculiar apostle; and to those who labored under his direction. As for the four evangelists, there is no reference in their Gospels, to such a controversy in any shape. It was doubtless the prominent object of their respective histories, to induce faith in the

indeed the true sacrifice, typically represented by the sacrifices under the law; the virtue of which was to make atonement, or reconciliation; as must therefore their antitype, which is expressly said to be a fulfilling of them.

The way in which the merits of Christ avail us, is not by imputation; which would included a transfer of merit, and therefore detract from the freedom of the grace; but it is the procuring cause. Thus, in the case of subjects under the displeasure of their prince, if he should pardon

Christians against so great an error; by intimating, that they thereby subjected themselves to the consequences of the threatening— “Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.” Not that this curse, as it stood in the law, was not allied with a gracious provision, for the relieving of the conscience from the weight of sin; but because this was henceforth to be continued under a new economy, by which the former was to be superseded. Although “the

law made nothing perfect; but the bringing in of a better hope did;" yet, even while the law lasted, intimations of the better hope to come were conspicuous appendages of the institution.

5. OF PERSEVERANCE.

Dissent from the Calvinistick Doctrine— The contrary is conformable to the human Character— Passages from the Old Testament— From the New— Exhortations and Dissuasives— Passages

*alleged by Calvinists—
Dangerous Tendency of
the Doctrine.*

IT seems an extraordinary instance of the effect of established opinion, under circumstances which represent inquiry as sinful, that when the Arminians began to examine the foundation of the prevalent theology of the Low Countries, and to appeal to the world for the result; they should at first exhibit the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, as merely a questionable

point: a doctrine, of which it will not be rash to affirm, although the proof will not be here brought, that it was absolutely unknown in the church, until after the beginning of the Reformation. In the preceding part of this work, the epistle to the Romans was thought silent as to anything in favor of the doctrine, or contrary to it. In what is to follow, the latter will be upheld as gospel truth.

Let it be remarked, that this is one of the last subjects, on which, what is here conceived to be truth,

subjection to it of the affections. Under these circumstances, no more can be looked for than the finding of the truth insinuated or presumed, when some other subject is in the contemplation of the writer; and of evidence of this sort, there is abundance.

Not to omit the Old Testament altogether; there are several passages in the third and the eighteenth chapters of the prophecy of Ezekiel, the substance of which is thus given in the twenty sixth verse of the eighteenth

chapter— “When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.” That is, say some, if such an apostasy could happen, the effect would follow. The supposition, it seems, is merely made: but let it be asked— For what purpose made, in the case in question? There is also introduced the old and arbitrary distinction between a secret will and the revealed. The passage is

rendered still more explicit by the frequent repetition of it, without such qualification as might prevent mistake.

There is also that passage in Psalm 69:28.—“Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not written with the righteous.” It is not denied by Calvinists generally, that the passage relates to another life; there being a connexion with a prophetick description of the sufferings of our Saviour. But there have been various ways thought of, to evade an authority,

hypotheses have their due weight; but it is here conceived, that the like may be devised without end.

But the possibility of a fall from grace is interwoven in the legal economy; being discernible in the very ground work of it —the covenant made with Abraham. Of this the sign was circumcision; to which was annexed the promise—"I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee." From this covenant, there might confessedly be on the part of man a final fall. But if any doubt,

shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware; and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.” The margin, instead of “cut him in sunder,” has, “cut him off;” that is, separate him from the body of the faithful: which is equally agreeable to the original, and exhibits” a better sense. Here is Christian character on one hand; and fall — final fall, on the other. St. John 15:6. “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered;

and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” Here is first pronounced a union of the believer with Christ, as a branch with its proper vine. The branch was before described, both as drawing nourishment and as bearing fruit: which is a contradiction of the usual evasion, that the severed branch represents a person who is merely of the visible church, without being of the invisible communion of the faithful. No; he comes under one of the strongest descriptions in scripture, of a spiritual membership of

Christ: yet, as the text shows, he may be at last like a branch withered, gathered, cast into the fire, and burnt.

Romans 14:15. “Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.” The matter here guarded against, is the undue use of Christian liberty: but why should it be restrained, if the apprehended consequence were such as could not happen? The place is contradictory to the point of limited redemption; but it is equally so, of this of final perseverance: for the

with a view to an ornamental crown, which, at the end of the course, was to reward the victor. St. Paul had undergone Christian discipline, with a view to a heavenly crown. He was however still aware, that the consequence of his relaxing might be his being at last a cast away; that is, unapproved or rejected by the judge. It will be in vain to attempt an explanation, founded on the consistency of practice with precept in the present life. Its race, like the race in the games, must be run, before the decision can be given.

there be any ground for the subtilty of an historical faith, it cannot be alleged here; because not consistent with the state, from which there is supposed a possibility of departing. Dr. Doddridge has so far a leaning to his system, as that, instead of bringing back the term, “ye stand,” to a conformity with the original, he goes still farther from it, by the paraphrase — “Ye maybe said to stand:” and he supposes of the latter part of the words of the passage, that the Greek favors their being construed into the

same sense with the seventeenth verse of the chapter— “And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain.” But this is quite wide of the sense of the apostle, in the place in question; which implies a contingency, as to the matter spoken of. But no such circumstance attached to the resurrection of Christ.

The same apostle, in Galatians 5:4, announces, as what must be the consequence of the intermixture of Judaism with Christianity, by the Gentile Christians—

are people of whom he says in chapter 4 verse 6—“Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”

St. Paul, in his first epistle to the Thessalonians, [3:5] informs them thus—“When I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labor be in vain.” Now, let there be considered the character of the people, to whom the apostle writes thus. In the beginning of the epistle, he remembers

of the gospel: but if they apply, as Calvinists commonly suppose, in part to the work of the Holy Ghost on the mind, their application will be the stronger on that account. In either case, there is much to the purpose in what follows— “And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost; so that ye were ensamples to all that believe, in Macedonia and Achaia.” Such were the saints, of whom St. Paul acknowledges

into my rest;" so the danger is held forth to those to whom the epistle is addressed—"Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem" [that is, be seen, or adjudged, or proved; for the original may mean any of these] "to come short of it." [*Chap. 4. verse 1*]

Throughout the whole epistle to the Hebrews, the writer of it seems to labor under the apprehension of an utter apostasy, of persons who had formerly both professed the faith

and suffered for it. And the most alarming considerations which he brings before them, are found in two passages, which speak decisively to the present purpose; although it must be confessed, that there is in each of them a difficulty, on which the question is not dependent. The first of the passages, is in chap. 6:4, 5, 6— “It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of

their eyes. Superadded to this, there is evidently implied a very considerable measure of the experience of the consolations of Christian hope. And then, in regard to the expression in the tenth chapter—“There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin;” it is well remarked, that the words simply express there being no other sacrifice, than that which has been rejected: but whether it may or may not be possible, to revert by repentance to that rejected sacrifice, is a point on which nothing is either affirmed or denied.

election sure; that is stable or firm; which is the sense of the original word. Their election is acknowledged; but there is required, that it should be rendered permanent. And how was this to be done? It is declared in the very passage; and was, by adding [*Verses 5, 6, 7.*] “to faith, virtue; an to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.” These are the very

matters referred to by the illative particle, in the verse under consideration. In the Alexandrine and other manuscripts, the true meaning is further identified, by its being added to the injunction—“Make your calling and election sure”—“by good works.” The Apostle had addressed his epistle “to them that have obtained like precious faith” with himself. If a fall from grace be impossible, how could that faith have been made more sure, by good works? St. John says, in his second epistle, verse 8—“Look to

authorities, by which the doctrine of final perseverance is supported. And the substance of them shall be taken from professor Turretine, in the order in which they have been arranged by him.

1. There are all the texts, which establish the doctrine of election; meaning in the Calvinistick sense of the word. Those quoted are Hebrews 6:17, Romans 9:11. 2. Timothy 2:19, Romans 8:29, 30, On the system here sustained, there can be expected no other answer, than a denial of the premises which lead

conditions; which must always be supposed to be performed by one of the parties, in order to make the promises of the other party binding. Besides, such texts relate to the Jews as a nation, and cannot be applied individually, unless in the way of analogy.

3. The conditional nature of promises furnishes a sufficient answer to the next description of texts, advanced by Turretine, and reciting promises, as in Deuteronomy 31:8, and Hebrews 13:5. The latter of

which says — “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” The passages parallel to these are Hosea 2:19, John 10:27, 28, and Matthew 16:18. The last is supposed by Protestants generally, to contain a promise not to individuals, but to the Church as a social body.

4. An argument is drawn from the merits and efficacy of the death of Christ, as applied to the subject in John 6:37 and 39; and in 17:22. The first of these says— “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that

cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." There can be no doubt of the abundant merit of the death of Christ, in reference to the end for which it was ordained. It was a property of this, that men must endure to the end, in order to be saved by it. But whether this be a necessary consequence of being once in grace, is a question left by the other subject, exactly as it was found. It is an honouring of Christ after a mistaken manner, to apply his merits to points, on the mere ground of our conceiving of them as suitably connected

with it. On some such ground as this, Cardinal Cajetan argued with Luther, for a fund of supererogatory works: and some have thought it injurious to the same merits, that even the sins of the elect, lived and died in, should interpose to hinder their salvation, purchased for them by so great a price.

5. From the union of the faithful with Christ, expressed Romans 8:38 and 1. Corinthians 6:17. The former was considered in the first department of this work; and the latter says— “He that is joined

unto the Lord is one spirit.” But from present union, the impossibility of future separation cannot be inferred. Else, how was Adam deprived of his early glory? And how happened it, that “the angels kept not their first estate?”

6. From the efficacy of the intercession of the Redeemer, expressed John 11:42, and Luke 22:32. The former says— “I knew that thou hearest me always;” and the latter— “I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.” The sense of these texts is satisfied, by their being supposed to

taking place in the substance, on which it was made. However, it is apprehended, that the sealing spoken of is of the Church, by the miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit.

8. “The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” [*Rom. 11:29*] It is answered here, as in the former part of the work, that if these gifts are lost, it is from human changeableness; and not from repentance or change in the divine mind.

9. From the nature of the spiritual life, which is described to be perpetual

or eternal, in John 5:24—6:40, and 1 John 5:13. The first says— “He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” These passages are expressive of the certainty of the love of God; but by no means prove, that it may not be disappointed of its object, by the inconstancy of man. A beneficent father might make very ample declarations, to assure his children of his unalterable affection, and of its

“incorruptible seed.” [*1 Pet. 1:23*] Yes, the seed is incorruptible, but the soil may prove barren. But to return to the passage: it ought to be interpreted by the purpose of the writer; which was simply, as the connexion shows, to affirm the indissoluble alliance subsisting between the Christian character and a holy life and conversation. If we must still listen to metaphor, brought in support of doctrine, it should be remembered, that he who is born, although he lives and acts, may die, The meaning can

amount to no more, than that while a man lives under the influence of the high and holy principle, implanted in him by the regenerating influence of Christianity, he cannot deliberately or habitually sin.

The 11th consists of metaphor altogether; urging the comparisons which have been made of the spiritual life; first, to “incorruptible seed,” as in the passage noticed above; then to a “living fountain;” as in John 4:14; and then, to “trees planted by streams of water;” as in

Psalm 1:3; and then, to a house built upon a rock; as in Matthew 7:24. All which contain simply the encouraging assurance, of the never failing supports of divine grace. But how far men will avail themselves of this, the passages say not.

12. St John says of apostates, they “went out from us, but they were not of us.” [*1 Pet. 2:19*] Answer: he says this of some, who had obtruded themselves on the faithful, under the cover of false appearances. But there are apostates of another

saints, without remarking the dangerous aspect which it wears, in relation to sinful security and even licentious living. That it has had this effect in many instances, is so well attested, that the fact will hardly be denied; although it will be remarked, that the persons in question were never, as they supposed themselves, in grace. Yet, to all appearance, they had been under the same convictions of conscience; and had been favored with the assurances thought to be possessed by those, who have been faithful to the

CONCLUSION.

The Subject should be excluded from Theology—Transactions in the Synod of Dort—Dean Hall's Sermon—Dr. Priestley's Acknowledgment—Late Introduction of Calvinism.

THE author hopes he has made it appear, that the subordinate parts of the Calvinistick system, instead of being founded on scripture, are the result of the opinion on the first and leading point; all the rest being accommodated to

daring either to lessen the sovereignty of God, on the one hand, or to impeach his goodness and his justice on the other; since, in regard to the former, there should be remembered what is intimated in scripture—“He giveth not account of any of his matters;” and, in regard to the latter, it cannot be unbecoming, in a professor of the Christian faith, to say with the Father of the faithful— “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Every reader of the transactions of the Synod of Dort must have noticed the pertinacity, with which

here conceived, not with demonstrable propriety; because the Arminians, in the preceding stages of the controversy, had made the affirmative of the points the most prominent. Of this they stood accused; being before the Synod, under a citation to support what they had affirmed. The case would have been different, had they treated predestination in the usual sense, as mere philosophy; but affirmed, without reserve, the universality of divine grace: which was not only demonstrable by clear texts of scripture, but

them, and if the election of them were with a view to their condition in another life, the like applies to the rejection of Ishmael and of Esau, whose damnation must be equally considered, as coming within the limits of the decree. The same must be preeminently true of the case of Pharaoh; whose damnation there is the less pretence for representing to be merely the result of the election of another. The whole tenor of the epistle to the Romans, on the Calvinistick plan of interpretation, represents

consequence of what they had taught of another sort. And it must even have been owned by those who denied the correctness of the inference, that the Arminians who made it were entitled to the opportunity of supporting their charge, before they should be condemned as false accusers of their brethren. It is difficult to perceive how, on this ground, they could have failed to be supported by the English divines, consistently with the decisions of their church. Brandt ascribes to them,

of all sorts of men, what is said in the 31st article of his church, which defines—“The offering of Christ once made,” to be “that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual.” This article appears, indeed, to have occasioned some embarrassment to the English divines; and to have produced a correspondence with their superiors at home. It was probably from a similar inducement, that they exhorted the body to great moderation on the fifth

point; which is, indeed, in direct contrariety to the doctrine of the church of England, of baptismal regeneration. And even in regard to the first point, they advised, that the doctrine of predestination should not be indiscriminately handled.

Although the author has vindicated the Synod and their president, in a single matter; yet he would not be understood, as extending the vindication generally. The intemperate ebullitions of his passions were such, as it would be difficult to find any persons of the

rested their cause on the affirmative of the second question. The negative on the first, on the fourth, and on the fifth, would have been obvious inferences; with which they might have been satisfied, without affirming any doctrine of their own on the first point; but showing, that the predestination spoken of in scripture related to another subject.

There having been introduced an allusion to the Arminian cause in the Synod of Dort, it was impossible to overlook what was found so much to

the purpose of the preceding distinction between Christian faith and philosophical speculation, in dean (afterwards bishop) Hall's sermon at the opening of that assembly. The author had entertained the design of extracting the part of the dean's discourse, which applies: but as the same sentiments are more compressed in a tract of the same excellent person called "Via media," it is judged, that the extract may with equal propriety be made from that.

[The historian, Brandt,

accountable for by the
circumstance, that
whatever spirit may be
supposed to have actuated
the body, Dr Hall found
among its members many
excellent persons, with
whose society he could not
but have been delighted. Be
these things as they may;
his sermon, at the opening
of the assembly, involves a
strong crimination of the
spirit of some of their
subsequent proceedings.]

In the said tract, Dr. Hall,
considering both sides as
agreed on fundamentals,
urges the King (James I.) to

unsound in its foundation and pernicious in its consequences; but to be disproved, without resort to so desperate an expedient. That the fact, relative to the early church, is as here stated, was amply confessed by Calvin; and if he be correct, the church, previous to the fifth century, had not found verified what St. Paul affirms of scripture, that it is “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto

APPENDIX No. 1: OF PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY.

*Consciousness opposed to
Necessity— Dr. Clarke's
Distinction between the
Mind and a Balance—
Consequences of supposing
the Mind acted on as a
Lever— Objection of
Confusion— Necessity
overthrows Praise and
Blame— Lord Kaims—
Bishop Berkeley —David
Hume— Restrictions on
Speculation— Danger of
extending necessity to
God— Mr. Leibnitz— Dr.*

*Priestley— President
Edwards.*

THE author of this work, in the department of it immediately preceding, has had occasion to refer to important changes made in the Calvinistick theory, by its availing of itself of the aid of what is said to be the more modern doctrine of philosophical necessity. It has been matter of surprise to him, that no Calvinist of the old school, so far as is here known, stepped forward, in the beginning, to forbid the banns of this unnatural marriage. This

determined by a principle inherent to itself. This sentiment may be illustrated by the following passage from Dr. Clarke, in his controversy with Mr. Leibnitz: “There is no similitude between a balance being moved by weights or impulse; and a mind moving itself, or acting upon a view of certain motives. The former is entirely passive; which is absolute necessity: The other not only is acted upon, but acts; which is the essence of liberty. The motive is something extrinsick to the mind. The

topicks extraneous to the mind of man. And it is not to be denied, that the subject is attended with difficulty, when seen in the point of view, that connects it with the eternal administration of the moral government of God. But the difficulty is removed, by considering the subject of an antecedent eternity, not only in itself but in all its relations, as beyond the conception, and interdicted to the curiosity, of men. And that this is true in scripture, as well as in reason, it has been one purpose of the preceding

The answer is, that doubtless this would be the effect, if these wayward wills were let loose, without the superintendence of a divine will, over-ruling them to its purposes, by means of the connexion between cause and effect impressed on matter: it being doubtless within the contemplation of the providence of God, what effect the self-determining mind of man would have on nature, in every event which would occur. This may be illustrated, by the improvement usually made of that passage in the

*And binding Nature
fast in fate,
Left free the human
will.”*

But are there no difficulties attendant on the necessarian scheme? There are many and great; of which the most prominent shall be stated.

It overthrows the foundation of moral praise and blame. If a man should have done you some substantial service, and an opportunity of a return should offer; however you may comply with the dictates of your

the beholder. It is not so, in the other department; in which the system may be consistent with pleasure on one hand, or with disgust on the other; but not with the sense either of virtue or of vice.

There is a still more important difficulty, in the connexion of the subject with responsibility. Under the operation of the theory, a man may be sensible of misery, but surely cannot be conscious of guilt. At least, if he accuse himself of the latter, it must be, by putting off the former for a time out of his mind. This,

rejecting of offers never made, and the defeating of grace never given; having been placed in circumstances under which it was impossible they should have effect; or how conscience can aggravate any other species of misery, which divine Omnipotence may be supposed to inflict, is very difficult to be conceived of.

And yet, that very circumstance is generally spoken of by Christians of every denomination, as the principal source of unhappiness to sinners, in another state of being.

after him came David Hume; who, from the opposite principle of irreligion, but proceeding on the same theory, struck at the root of all certainty, on religious and moral subjects; representing man as a mere bundle of ideas, brought together in accidental association. Dr. Beattie, in speaking of Mr. Hume's representation of human nature, has noticed the compliment paid to Shakespeare — that another order of intelligent beings, without converse with man, might form a conception of him from the

writings of the poet: and then the doctor asks, whether the same or anything like it can be affirmed, of Mr. Hume's professed delineation of the nature of the same being; which is indeed wide of any knowledge to be acquired of it, from conversation with one another. Such theories may be ingenious; but without considering whether we are able to confute them, it is rational to pronounce, that they cannot be true.

If philosophical necessity be judged by this standard, there seems nothing which

can prevent its sinking under the weight of opposite experience and observation. And what makes the writer of this the more lament, that Calvinism should take shelter under the wings of such a useless kind of metaphysicks, is his remarking, not only that it is welcome to the minds of many thinking Deists; but that it is apt to be so, in proportion as they find in materialism the same charms to captivate them. As we form our ideas of the perfections of God, by ascribing to him, in the

among the heathen, the fatalists considered the gods themselves as subject to the decrees of fate. This is mythology; but the principles wrapt up in it, were the result of deep thought. The system was consistent: and it is to be feared, that some religious necessarians have adopted it, without perceiving the consequences in which it ends.

The late Dr. Priestley, in his tract on philosophical necessity, seems to have avoided looking on the subject, in the point of view in which it may be thought

overlooked. But, whatever may have been the opinions of the ancient philosophers, we have too many evidences among the modern, that the mixture of necessity and materialism, advocated by Dr. Priestley, has a tendency to the more sublimated philosophy of that kind, denominated from Spinoza.

President Edwards seems to have been less shy than Dr. Priestley, of the bearing of his principles on the present subject. He has spoken of it in this point of view, in the seventh and eighth sections of the

fourth part of his Inquiry. In the seventh, he argues that the operations of the divine mind are not the less free, because they are and must be always directed to ends of the most consummate wisdom: and he quotes Dr. Clarke to the same effect. In the eighth section, he treats of that which is the main point, the choice of the divine mind, in an alternative, in which either side would be consistent with supreme wisdom. Here he throws on those who differ from him, the burthen of the proof, that any such alternative

this extent; and that therefore, there results the importance of every man's seriously considering, before he adopts the sentiment and other sentiments akin to it, how exactly it coincides with the ancient doctrine of fate, exercising sovereignty over the gods; and even how little distant it is from the modern doctrine of Spinoza, who had no other idea of God, than as an energy arising out of the organization and the operations of matter. The mutual relation of these things, was certainly not

the divine wisdom must be possessed by the man who supposes, that God has subjected the species to the influence of certain principles; and made them conducive to publick and private happiness, by a salutary deception; but has not screened the falsehood from the discerning eyes of the philosophick few! We approve and disapprove of actions of ourselves and others, on grounds of a moral nature; and not at all connected with, or rather in contrariety to any notions, which the theory of necessity suggests. That we

much offended at the threatened injury to morals, in the resting of them on deception. And when the Essay came to the knowledge of president Edwards, who, about the same time, had interwoven the two systems of Calvinism and Necessity, in the treatise which has been referred to, he made some strictures on the other performance, designed to show wherein it differed from his scheme, especially in the point here contemplated. Like a religious man, he shows himself averse to the idea of

be inconsistent with praise and blame, reward and punishment.” And he brings two arguments to the purpose.

The first is, in substance, that the mass of mankind, under the government of common sense, and not perplexing themselves with the metaphysical distinctions of philosophy, look for no further liberty, than that which is opposed to constraint. So that if a man act from his own will, and not from the compulsion of another, they praise or censure, without concerning

told, and to give credit to metaphysicians for a sentiment, that the will itself is acted on by causes over which the agent has no control; would they not then think him as little the subject of praise or blame, as a weight moved by a pulley or by a lever? It is here supposed, that such would be the result.

The second argument is, that if the common sense of mankind were to withhold praise and blame from actions, because of moral necessity or impossibility; the nearer any action should approach to this,

alliance.

These are the ideas of the author, on the subject of philosophical necessity. The use contemplated in the recording of them, is the inducing of a suspicion of the validity of Calvinism; on account of its thus having recourse to a weapon, which, if not forged on the foreign anvil of infidelity, has at least been polished by its hands. Were Calvin to make his appearance at the present day, he might reasonably demand to be informed, what relation there is in these remarks on

although the appeal is still made “to the law and to the testimony,” there is not so much confidence in their aid, as when these were thought the only ground, which there was occasion to have recourse to.

**APPENDIX No 2: An
Analysis of the Rev.
Jonathan Edwards's
Interpretation of the last
ten Verses, in the fifth
Chapter of the Epistle to
the Romans**

*[See vol. 6. of the 1st. Am.
Ed. of his works, p. 352,*

et seq.]

*General remarks on Man's
Ruin and Redemption—
President Edwards's
Remarks on the 13th and
14th Verses— His Answers
to Objections— Faults
found by him with two
dissenting Ministers—
Instance of his
Consistency.*

The interpretation here referred to, is in president Edwards's Treatise of Original Sin. The book had never been seen by the author of the present work, until after his finishing of

subject; except, in what the ingenious author has said on the above named passage in the epistle to the Romans; in which there are some matters, not found in Calvinistick writers the most commonly met with.

The writer of this knows of no Calvinist, more entitled to the praise of consistency than president Edwards. There is a complaint frequently made by the advocates of the system maintained by him, that their opponents charge them with consequences not fairly drawn. But it is here believed, that some of

from. But these are matters, which will be more fully opened in what follows. The disquisition of president Edwards is divided into two parts.

SECTION I.

Here are eight remarks of president Edwards on the interpretation to which he objects.

The first, turns on the meaning of the word “death.” That the original and obvious meaning is a termination of life, is not denied by him. And that it receives a more extended

mistake turns on the equivocal sense of the words “eternal life.” That they may express celestial happiness, placed in contrast to eternal misery, is conceded. In themselves, however, they mean no more than a never ending existence; which is contrasted by the apostle, pertinently to his argument, with an extinction of being. But why did president Edwards go below the passage, in quest of the meaning of the word “death;” when it is used in the verse but one before the passage; where

instance, but how it got abroad and abounded. Alike foreign to the present argument, is his third remark — that on the principles opposed to his, the force of the causal particles “through” and “by” is done away. It is so; unless in the sin of Adam there be seen a causality, in reference to the mortality of his whole posterity. It may also be said of the fourth, that it treats of something foreign to the present object. The remark is in opposition to a position of Dr. Taylor, that the entailment of mortality

was not a dispensation of displeasure, but an exercise of grace and kindness.

The author of this, not having access to Dr. Taylor's work, does not know his sense on the present point, further than as he gathers it from the work of the opponent. If Dr. Taylor meant no more, than that the punishment was inflicted, under the design of making it finally subservient to good; it is difficult to perceive the error. But it would rather appear, from the statement on the other side, that he contended for its being no

punishment at all: which is contrary to the whole tenor of the history.

The weight of the fifth remark of president Edwards, is against what is here conceived to be the true construction of the thirteenth and fourteenth verses of the passage

— “For until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.” In order to perceive the principle on

between Adam and Moses, had incurred the death inflicted for Adam's sin on all. These were points, which the aim of the apostle's argument made no call on him to prove; and he refers to them as acknowledged principles; in order to show, what he had especially in view, that, the death of Christ was for all, both Jews and Gentiles. President Edwards treats the passage, as if the apostle were endeavouring to prove, what he is here supposed to have presumed: and therefore, the charge of

inconsequential reasoning does not lie against the sense here contended for, however it may have lain against that of Dr. Taylor. For the same reason, there is nothing to the present purpose, however pertinent it may have been in answer to the same gentleman, in all president Edwards has said concerning the right of God to inflict death, as the punishment of breaches of the law of nature. There is no doubt of this; although Jews and Christians must believe, that it was actually inflicted for the breach of positive law. And this fact

might reasonably be— not proved, but — appealed to by St. Paul, because of its subserviency to a matter beyond it in his contemplation.

It is here conceived, that the interpretation given will derive an accession of strength, if, on the very respectable authority of the Alexandrian manuscript, we read “was not imputed” instead of “is not imputed;” this bearing the appearance of an abstract proposition; and the other agreeing better with a fact referred to. If the criticism be correct; the latter part of

the verse should be rendered — “there being no law.”

The sixth remark may be considered as confined to the peculiarities of Dr. Taylor’s scheme; and to argue well, that there could be no grace in redemption, which yet the passage is acknowledged to affirm, if there had been no penalty on the apostasy.

The seventh remark relates to the signification of the words “judgment,” “condemnation,” “justification” and “righteousness.” President Edwards’s charge of

abridgment of the divine bounty to the species; and as the words, in the place under consideration, have not a moral but a forensick meaning; they might very well be used to express a change of the divine dispensations, without being designed to charge crime by imputation, where there was none in fact. Under this judicial construction of the word, one of the evangelists does not scruple to imply, that his blessed Master was a malefactor, where it is said— “There were also two other malefactors led with

him to be put to death.”
[*Luke 23:32*] Some indeed,
from what is here
conceived to be misapplied
delicacy, endeavour to
avoid this, by putting a stop
between “other,” which
they change into “others,”
and “malefactors.” This not
only renders the words in
combination an unusual
expression; but is alien
from the spirit of the
remark made by St. Mark
15:28, that in the
circumstance stated, there
was fulfilled the
prediction— “He was
numbered with the
transgressors:” that is, he

he supposes the unreasonableness of the interpretation put on the words — “By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.” The offensive interpretation and that here advocated is, that by the sin of Adam, all were in such sort constituted sinners, as that they sustained the consequences of sin. No doubt it is one of the instances, of which however there are many, of St. Paul’s giving of energy to his discourse, by unusual modes of speech. And in a preceding subdivision of

former. He urges, that they were or would be so, in the estimation of those who punished. But no good reason can be given, why the historians should speak agreeably to such false conception, if the term in question did not apply by custom, independently both on guilt and on the supposition of it.

SECTION 2

AS the first section had been devoted to the demolishing of the interpretation of an opponent; the present is

occupied in laying down the author's own: beginning with the scope of the epistle, as declared in the chapters preceding the chapter, of which the verses in question are a part. The first property of the epistle, supposed by president Edwards, is, its treating largely of the depravity and ruin of mankind, in their natural state. But it has been contended in the first department of this work, and is here repeated, that the natural state of man, be this what it may, is not the subject treated of in those early chapters. There are

enumerated in them some crimes, for which man has no natural appetite; and others, which mark indeed a depraved state of society, but were never in any community found descriptive of all the members of it. The other sense, however, although in opposition to the plainest language, must be persevered in by the Calvinist, in his interpretation of the early parts of that epistle, in order to lay a foundation for his exposition of all that follows.

Again, it is remarked, how

idea of his leading up of their attention, to sin's entering into the world by Adam, the common father of Jew and Gentile: Which, with several coincident remarks, must have been intended in contradiction of the theory, making the sin of Adam merely personal in its consequences.

From this, president Edwards goes into remarks on the 13th and 14th verses, similar to those in his first section and already attended to; and which are here preparatory to his own interpretation of the 14th —

presumption of the truth of what had gone before; except that president Edwards, although he acknowledges some difficulty in the 13th verse and in the next which has been the last under consideration, insists, that the passage in general, is one of the plainest in scripture.

It will be allowed by all, that the difficulty lies principally in those very verses, from which, the one or the other interpretation of sin and death will have an influence on all the rest. It would further seem, that

Edwards makes, against those of the opposite system, of their straining of expressions and their racking of words and phrases. There can be no principles adopted for the explaining of the passage, on which it will not appear that extraordinary phraseology is a conspicuous property of it.

President Edwards, towards the end of his treatise, answers objections, which he supposes to be brought against his theory in general. The objections will be here considered, no

further than as they relate to the point of imputation, grounded on the aforesaid passage.

One of the objections he represents as founded on the description of the last judgment; expressly said to be conducted, in reference to every individual, according to his works. The answer given is, that the end of the judgment is to ascertain the primary distinction of the difference of state, and the secondary distinction of the difference of degrees; and that the question of the imputation of Adam's sin enters not

into either. The reply is, that the object is not to ascertain the one or the other; but to acquit or condemn, according to known and, humanly speaking, recorded works. Now, if eternal damnation should be understood under the term “death,” as coming on all men originally for Adam’s sin; they who are not released from that state by the mercy of God through Christ, absolutely sink under the weight of that sin. And the most remarkable application of the principle is to all

infants, except the elect.

Another objection is, from there not being a single instance in scripture, of the use of the word “impute,” in the sense supposed; although it is used in the sense of a reference to personal sin. The author opposed had said, that it is often so used; which occasions president Edwards to remark, that it is twice only. He does not, however, allege a single instance of the use of the word in the sense denied by the objection. Yet he is aware, that other words will be said to have been

used, which plainly import the imputation of personal sin. But so likewise, says he, of the other subject. It may be demanded — where? His answer is, by adducing instances from the passage here in question; for no other does he instance. But this cannot be allowed in argument. And there remains the objection, that, in the only place cited to establish the imputation of the sin of Adam, the word “imputed” is indeed used, but applicable to the charging of men with the demerit of their own sins.

resurrection was referred to another dispensation; since said, on that very account, to have “brought life and immortality to light.” But he further says, that some of the perfections of God are scarcely mentioned in the scriptures; and instances infinity, omnipresence, and omniscience. The very idea of a divine Being necessarily involves whatever can contribute to perfection: whereas it will not be said, that our being affected by Adam’s sin necessarily extends to every possible way, in which a

sovereign Being can cause it to extend, for a display of his omnipotence. Besides, president Edwards seems not accurate, in so stating infinity, as if it were of itself an attribute, distinct from the other attributes of the divine nature. It seems more proper to say of them all, that they are infinite. Wherever, therefore, the power, or the wisdom, or the goodness of God is displayed, as being without bounds, infinity is ascribed to him. As to the two other attributes, they are found in many more places of scripture, than might be

“who hath righteousness and judgment for the habitation of his seat.”

The following is a sketch of the reasoning of president Edwards, on the subject of identity. He lays down the position, which the author whom he opposes had maintained also, that we are upheld in existence by a continual divine agency. He remarks, that the existence of any created substance, at the present moment, cannot be the effect of its existence in the moment preceding. Therefore, the cause of its continuance in successive

periods is the divine constitution simply; the operation of which he argues to be accordingly equivalent to a new production out of nothing, at each successive moment. This arguing is to show, that if God annexes identity to these successive productions (or what amounts to them) out of nothing, he may with equal reason annex oneness, or identity to such a relative condition of all mankind, as resembles the root and all the branches of a tree: And if to such a collective body coexisting, to the

consciousness, which constitutes identity: but not so under the latter. What the omnipotence of God can effect, is not here in question. Doubtless, his power is equal to the making of A, suppose himself guilty of the crimes committed by B; and to possess all the feelings attached to a seeming consciousness of them. The contrariety of this to the wisdom and benevolence of God, is the thing maintained: but surely not with more reason, than in the kind of consciousness supposed by president

exercise of the sovereignty of God, in hardening and damning whom he will.

Of this treatise of president Edwards it may seem remarkable, that, although entitled to rank with his treatise on Freewill in point of ingenuity, it has not the like celebrity with the latter work, among the advocates of Calvinism. The author of the present work thinks it may be accounted for, from the consistency maintained by president Edwards, in his pursuing of his opinions into all their consequences. From these, a very great

To get rid of this, they supposed, that the first sin was not imputed to infants in the same degree, as to Adam himself. One of the divines was in hopes of providing, in this way, a retreat for the little wretches, in annihilation. The other thought himself entitled to affirm, that their condition would not be worse than non-existence. All this is much to the dissatisfaction of president Edwards; who, arguing more logically from the data held in common, rejects such softening expedients, invented for

the easing of the feelings of humanity. The expedients may be evidences of the benevolence of the ministers alluded to; but are not in harmony with the principle of the general doctrine; and cannot pretend to derive support from any passage in the scriptures.

This analysis shall be concluded with another instance of the consistency of the same eminent divine, relative, not indeed immediately to the question of imputation; but to another, which has been treated of in the preceding

part of the work; and which is indeed connected with the whole subject. The fact to be recorded is taken from his life, prefixed to his Treatise on Religious Affections.

President Edwards began his ministry as colleague of his maternal grandfather, in Northampton, Massachusetts. The latter, during a long residence in that place, had encouraged the members of his congregation to present themselves at the communion, provided their lives were correct; and although they might not

admit to the communion, without previous conversion. This excited a flame, which produced a separation of the pastor from his flock; of whom there were two hundred votes against twenty, for his immediate removal. This narrative is here given, to show the issue in which consistent reasoning, from what is supposed a mistaken datum, cannot fail to terminate. President Edwards, who possessed great sincerity, and at the same time strong powers of mind, reconciled himself to any consequences of his

PART 3

*A Comparison of the
Controversy between the
Calvinists and the
Arminians, with the
Opinions of the early
Fathers.*

INTRODUCTION.

*The Kind of Evidence to be
deduced from the Fathers—
The early Fathers, silent on
the Points denominated
Calvinism— This
continued, until the Time
of St. Austin— Calvin
acknowledges the Fact.*

THERE ought to be clearly understood the purpose, for which reference is made to an authority extraneous to holy scripture: especially as there are some, who criminate every appeal to the fathers; as if it were a removing of the cause from before the tribunal of the paramount authority of the law and the testimony. It is accordingly here declared, that no idea is entertained of going beyond the limits of the canon, for the establishing of any opinion, not found in the books of

which it is composed. But it is conceived, that the sense of the times immediately following the apostles must, as a fact, be a strong testimony on the question of what was the faith, which the apostles handed to them; and, in that point of view, may give considerable aid in the interpreting of scripture. This is no more than what is attributed to them, by the admission of their testimony, in regard to what books are to be received as the writings of the apostles. The argument, as applying to any leading doctrine or institution of

Christianity, in proof of its having been held at the time in question, appears to the writer of this equally cogent, as when applied to the genuineness of the book, in which the doctrine or the institution is supposed to be found.

But the argument appears to him even to increase in weight, when applied in the negative form; or, when it is pleaded that a certain doctrine could not have been delivered by the apostles, because not found in the remains of early times; and especially, those of them written with the

to be found.

The argument is even stronger, than if there were professed to be given authorities, in express contradiction of the tenets referred to: that is, than if the passages to be adduced were not only inconsistent with them—for such are found and will be brought forward — but than if they bore the appearance of designed contradiction. For that would suppose another theory, and another party advocating it; who might perhaps have said for themselves, what has not reached us: and it will be in

that nothing certain can be learned from their writings. For some will interpret this, as though I intended to deprive them of the right of giving their suffrages, because their opinions are all adverse to mine. But I have had no other object in view, than simply and faithfully to consult the benefit of pious minds, who, if they wait to discover the sentiments of the fathers on this subject, will fluctuate in perpetual uncertainty.”

Again, speaking of the divine influence, he says—
“And he moves the will, not

1. OF PREDESTINATION.

*Apostolick Fathers—
Accounts of them by Mr.
Toplady, Dr. Haweis, and
Mr. Milner— Succeeding
Fathers— The Time when
Predestination, in the
Philosophical Sense, was
introduced— Fathers later
than the above—
Consequence— Change
effected by St. Austin—
Interposition of the Papal
See— The Subject purely
Metaphysical.*

ON the subject of this
department, the first

of sentences; which, even if they were to the purpose of those who quote them, as indeed they are not, would at the same time be evidence, that the doctrines at issue were of no very prominent importance, in the estimation of the writers by whom they are so incidentally alluded to.

The passages shall be taken as found cited by Mr. Toplady, a clergyman of the church of England, noticed in a preceding part of this work; whose zeal, however, is supposed by the writer of this, to have carried him to a length of torture of the

most acknowledged merit in his way. He ascribes there being no opposition to the anti-calvinistick opinions, to the circumstance that, in the early ages, the adverse opinions were universally held. If this had been the fact, it would account for there being no opposition to the supposed errors; but surely, not for the withholding of what are affirmed to be such important truths.

The above is not the worst effect of the zeal of Mr. Top-lady: for it is desirable to ascribe to the same cause

The writer of this work hopes he has shown himself careful in the progress of it, to avoid personal censure, beyond what was involved in competition of opinion. In the present instance, he has deviated from his general line of conduct, for these two reasons — That Mr. Toplady's departure from Christian charity is here thought so enormous, as to render it doubtful, how far his writings can with propriety be noticed, without a protest against the spirit which they breathe, in relation to those

Stress is laid, on its being said that — “Christ chose his own apostles;” and that, “it was requisite that he (Christ) should suffer on the tree:” which last is construed in favor of necessity. Other authorities of the like kind are produced; but according to the interpretation given of them, scores to the same purpose might be taken out of the writings of known and professed Arminians.

When Mr. Toplady comes to the interesting epistle of St. Clement, he finds a sentiment which would be indeed to the purpose, if

incongruous that could have been devised.

There are other passages cited to the purpose; but so evidently foreign to it, that there can be no occasion to repeat them. Some of them apply to divine providence, and to the sovereignty of God in nature. These subjects were doubtless considered as inseparably connected with the question of predestination, in the mind of Mr. Toplady; but he must have known, that in the conceptions of others, they were distinct.

But does not St. Clement, like St. Paul, make use of

the term “elect?” He does; and like St. Paul, in a sense different from that supported by Mr. Toplady; as appears in the second section, where he tells those whom he addresses, in reference to their former laudable conduct— “There was among you, by night and day, a solicitude for the whole brotherhood: that with mercy and conscience, the number of the elect might be saved;” strongly implying, that some of the elect, meaning of the visible church, might not finally be saved.

The manner in which Dr.

Haweis, another Calvinistick clergyman of the church of England, mentions the epistle of St. Clement, in a work which he has called— “An History of the Christian Church,” is worthy of notice. Notwithstanding that writer’s talent at the discovery of what he thinks corrupt doctrine in the fathers, he found in this favored epistle [*Chap. 2. sect. 2. Cent. 2.*] “no deviation perceivable, in doctrine or practice, from the apostolick model.” Is this negative merit all? And had St. Clement nothing to

give weight to his name, with readers of a certain description. For this reason, there is propriety in informing such readers, that Dr. Haweis, although an ordained and beneficed minister of said church, was in the habit of openly giving his patronage to societies, withdrawing from its communion and rejecting the obligation of its institutions. By what processes of reasoning he may have reconciled such conduct to consistency of character and fidelity to engagements, is here unknown. The only reason

for recording the fact, is, that it may be a protest against any use of his authority, as that of a clergyman of the church of England.

From St. Clement, Mr. Toplady passes to St. Ignatius. And as the venerable father has been conceived by him to speak to some other points of the controversy, besides this of predestination; they shall be all presented in one view; it being not thought of sufficient moment to divide the attention, by an arrangement of them under their respective points. The

same reasons will apply to the indiscriminate citation of passages from some other early writers, who will be introduced into this division of the work.

The first of the epistles of St. Ignatius remarked on by Mr. Toplady, is that to the Smyrneans; from which he thinks it worth his while to fasten on one passage, expressing the writer's confidence in their stability; another, affirming that Christ suffered on our account, that we might be saved; and another, expressing that repentance is difficult, but in the power

twelfth section, he finds it hard to get rid of an intimation evidently against him; when the writer exhorts the church whom he was addressing, to pray for him, lest he should be found a cast-away. In referring to the epistle to the Romans, [pg. 133] there is a notorious change of the sense of a passage, in the 3d. section. The martyr says, that Christianity [as the Greek copy of Vossius has it] or a Christian, agreeably to the Latin copy of Usher, is “the work of greatness.” There is

evidently wanting another substantive; which should be either greatness of speech, if the first copy be followed, or greatness of mind, according to the last, in order to accommodate to the respective standards. Mr. Toplady has evidently followed, or trod in the steps of someone who followed, the copy of Usher. But on what authority Mr. Toplady translated “the mighty operation of the divine agency” cannot be here conjectured. There is nothing in the context, which justifies such a freedom.

It would seem, that the edition of Isaac Vossius, taken from the Medicean library, being in the language in which the epistles were written, must be of more authority generally than that of Archbishop Usher, given from a manuscript in Caius College, Cambridge. But this does not apply to the epistle to the Romans, which was not found in the Medicean manuscript. Le Clerc, the learned annotator on Cotelierius, thinks that the words in the Greek copy of this author, agree best with the

connexion: But Archbishop Wake has followed the latin copy, in his translation of this epistle; noting in the margin, the differences of the other. The embarrassed state of the passage renders it hardly worth the pains of any man to supply it with conjectural additions, for the support of any doctrine whatsoever.

It may be to the purpose not to leave Ignatius, without taking notice of a quotation from him in Gerard Vossius, [*Lib. 2. part 1. page 159.*] in which this writer thinks he finds an authority for the

translation of archbishop Usher, that the said Gerard is not to be blamed for his mistake here noticed. Less indulgence is due to a late work; [*Dr. Rees's Cyclopedia*] which says, under the article "Bishop," speaking of Ignatius— "As several of the epistles ascribed to him are spurious, no great stress can be laid on his authority." While yet the said work, under the article "Apollinarians," quotes the same Ignatius as of their opinion; although it is not in the genuine epistles, but in those confessedly

interpolated, that the sentiment alluded to is met with. It is not a little in favor of the genuine epistles, that in the two instances here alluded to, even the interpolated are thought deserving of attention, when apparently favorable to the purpose of writers, whose systems of ecclesiastical discipline naturally influenced to the rejection of both.

After Ignatius, Mr. Toplady [*pg. 134*] takes notice of the epistle of the church of Smyrna, relating to the martyrdom of their bishop St. Polycarp. Among

introduced had better have submitted to the authority of Calvin; who, as already quoted, acknowledged that the early ecclesiastical writers “were against him. Mr. Toplady, indeed, with the exception of those very early ones referred to, is inclined to give up the fathers. For he says, that he once bestowed on them considerable time and attention, but found the employment barren and unimproving. He acknowledges, that there are some excellent things; but, says he, the golden grains are almost lost,

not however without a reference to their foundation in Christ's redemption. But when Dr. Haweis speaks of their want of precision of doctrine, it may fairly be inferred from the general tenor of his work, that, under the term, he contemplated an entire absence of the doctrines, which were with him the substance of Christian verity. Dr. Haweis acknowledges of Ignatius in particular, that, "in doctrine, he does not seem to have degenerated from the truth as it is in Jesus:"

A cold compliment; and of which no further proof is given, than that “the superscription of the epistle to the church of Ephesus, marks strongly the doctrines of grace.” *[Chap. 4. Cent. 2]* That is, it has the word predestinated; but whether in the sense of the writer who makes the remark, or in that contended for in this work, is the question.

The author cannot leave this subject of the apostolick fathers, without recommending it to the serious consideration of any sincere inquirer, into

before, the full effect of “the breaking down of the partition wall;” and of “Jew and Gentile being one in Christ,” Since the work of Mr. Toplady and of Dr. Haweis, there has come into notice a production, which has excited attention in England, and has been reprinted in the United States— “A history of the Christian Church, by the Rev. Joseph Milner,” who seems to have been a clergyman of the church of England, of some celebrity. Like the two authors above-mentioned, he is a Calvinist; and although not

possessed abundance of a singular kind of charity, in supposing piety to abound in heretical and schismatical communions; even where there were no documents in his support. Not so Mr. Milner; who, on the contrary, is not sparing of his censures on people of that description.

The stating of these facts is intended principally with a relation to Mr. Toplady. If, in what appeared to him in the shape of Calvinism, in the apostolick fathers, nothing of the kind was seen by Mr. Milner, who agreed with him in

community, and to their militant state on earth.

On going beyond the apostolick fathers, it is necessary to quit Mr. Toplady; because he did not consider any beyond them as worthy of his notice. Not so Dr. Haweis; who, professing to write a history, found himself under the necessity of weighing the merits of distinguished characters, within the bounds of his narrative; if it were only to show how much, when weighed in his balance, they were wanting. This writer professes, that

rather in retirement from it. The same has happened, in regard to ecclesiastical transactions. In the record of them, we are shocked by the instances of ambition and crooked cunning which we meet with; although, doubtless, we are also gratified by opposite instances of sublime virtue. In addition to these, there was an immense mass of piety, the existence of which has been manifested in its effects; while the possessors of it have been unknown to fame.

If, in persons of the last description, Dr. Haweis

world. But this does him little honour; if they had departed so far from the truth, as the narrative of Dr. Haweis supposes. The strict life of Paphnutius is mentioned, merely because of the weight which it gave to a very correct sentiment expressed by him, in the council of Nice, on the subject of marriage; and nothing further is known of his opinions, except, that he was on the orthodox side, on the subject of the Arian heresy. Of the other descriptions of persons mentioned, it is certain that they caused needless

affirmed—that in those days there were some at least, who believed the doctrines now generally known under the name of Calvinism, and held up by Dr. Haweis and others, as exclusively entitled to the honourable commendation of being the doctrines of Grace.

It is then no small evidence of there having been no such theory in the early ages, that it was not found by Dr. Haweis, who set off professedly in search of it. And the author to whom the plan of the present work invites

human will, nearly” [he might have said exactly] “in the strain of the modern followers of Arminius.” [Page 189] That Justin speaks very unlike a Calvinist is evident, where he says [Page 15 Ed. Thirley] —“That we should have existed in the beginning, was not of ourselves, but to follow those things which are agreeable to him,” (God) “choosing them by the help of those rational powers, given to us by him, he persuades us and draws us to the faith.”

Mr. Milner, noticing the

indeed would some be good, and others bad: For either we must resolve, that fate is the cause of evil; and that she does things contrary to herself; or, that which we have before said must be seen to be true, that virtue and vice are nothing, and that good and evil exist in opinion only; which, as true reason declares, is the highest impiety and injustice.” The martyr goes on to other similar remarks; concluding the subject with affirming, that his doctrine was that of the prophetick spirit; and quoting to this

purpose Deuteronomy
30:15—19, and Isaiah
1:16—20.

If anyone should be disposed to deny, that there is a resemblance between the Stoical doctrines of fate, and the predestination maintained by Calvinists, it would be little to the purpose; because the reasoning of the writer goes as much to the merits of the one, as to those of the other. There shall be but one more passage brought from the same author, although many things might be copied from him to the same effect. In his

dialogue with Trypho the Jew, [*Page 332, Thirlby*] he says—

“For God, willing that angels and men should be, through freewill, every one of his own power, that each might do as he was able, created them such.”

All this we read in a work, written within half a century after the last of the apostles; not left by the author in his closet, but addressed to the civilized world, in favor of the faith which he professed. In particular, his apologies are directed, the first of them to the emperor, and the

presumable, what is to become of the army of martyrs, by whose blood we have supposed the church to have been watered, during at least the first three centuries of the Christian era?

The writer next claiming attention is Irenæus. As Justin lived in the middle, so Irenæus in the close, of the second century. Considering that he wrote against the heresies of his time, it would have been natural for him to have included the sentiments in contrariety to Calvinism, had they then been deemed

heretical. If it should still be insisted on, that they had not yet showed their heads, the contrary is evident in Ireneus himself, particularly in the 71st and 72d chapters of his 4th book; which are full of matter to the purpose. A part of the 71st only shall be cited. It is well known, that the original Greek of this work is lost; nothing remaining but a translation of it, in very bad Latin; in which the passage intended to be here given in English, is as follows — “But another thing which he” [meaning God] “says—how often

a strain of reasoning, evidently as anti-calvinistick as ever was written by Arminius or any of his followers.

There is something singular in Dr. Haweis's treatment of the character of this celebrated person. "He quits" (says Dr. Haweis) "the scriptural grounds of God's election, and grace;—and supposes all that self-sufficiency of the human intellect, and human agency, which bespeaks a man too little acquainted with his own heart." [*Vol. 1. page 190.*] Not a circumstance of this

there was no reason to distinguish one part of it from another; especially, as Dr. Haweis allows, that the first strokes of vengeance would naturally alight on those who presided in the Christian assemblies.

There may be use, in noticing a different treatment shown to Ireneus by Mr. Milner, from that of Dr. Haweis. The latter inferred from the Arminianism of the very early father, that he was a stranger to his own heart. The former, after noticing also his Arminianism, adds— “There is not much

of pathetick, practical, or experimental religion in the work" (on the early heresies.) "The author's plan, which led him to keep up a constant attention to speculative errors, did not admit it. Yet there is everywhere so serious and grave a spirit, and now and then such displays of goodness, as show him very capable of writing what might have been singularly useful to the church in all ages." [Vol. 1. page 262] It has been seen, that Dr. Haweis, besides pronouncing of the same venerable person, that he

of evangelical truth?

There is a passage in Ireneus, which must have been peculiarly offensive to the mind of Dr. Haweis. It is in the 48th chapter of the 4th book, in which the saint interprets the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, in direct contrariety to the Calvinistick system, making it consist in the delivering of him up to the consequences of his own wilful unbelief. And on the same plan, there are interpreted Isaiah 6:10; 2 Corinthians 4:4, and others, all of them prominent texts with the

full of information. It shows that these subjects, as matters of controversy in the church, were at that time unknown.

In the same age with Ireneus, lived Tertullian. Notwithstanding the mixture of character truly ascribed to him by Dr. Haweis, no man is considered as better acquainted with the state of the church in his own day, or as more faithful in reporting it. Cyprian, whose orthodoxy has escaped impeachment, even from Dr. Haweis, was accustomed to call

Tertullian his master. And it is a known fact, that he was never thought heterodox, any further than as relates to the latter part of his life, and to the error of Montanism into which he then fell. His admirable apology, addressed to the Roman senate, is, of itself, sufficient to render his name respectable in the Christian church. This celebrated work was written long before his fall: and if the doctrines called Calvinistick were such as pervades the whole system of revealed truth; it might be expected, that at least

Cotemporary with Tertullian, there was Clemens of Alexandria. It will hardly be said, that in the writings of this learned man, there is to be met with, anything favorable to Calvinism; although, had it entered into his system, it might have been expected to have shown its influence, at least in his book called Poedagogus; which is an extensive delineation of Christian duty: a work of a kind of which there is probably no instance from under the pen of a Calvinist, without its savouring very strongly of

his opinions, on the subjects of predestination and grace. But nothing of this falls from the pen of Clemens. On the contrary, it is worthwhile to notice the manner in which he uses the word, “predestination;” it being precisely in conformity with the sense contended for in the explanation of the same word, as used in scripture. The passage here alluded to is in his Stromata, and in the 765th page of Syllaburgius’s edition of this father’s works. Speaking of the one church, existing in the

unity of the same faith, he defines the said church to consist of the persons whom God had “predestinated before the foundation of the world;” thus showing, that the predestination spoken of related to profession in this world; and not as of necessary consequence, to salvation in the next.

This very passage of Clemens is adduced by Vossius, [*Book 6. Thesis 8*] in establishment, not of the point here sustained, but to prove, that the fathers held a predestination founded on prescience. The writer of

undertake to say: but he judges Beza to be right in the opinion, that it was in or near the time of Origen, when there arose the idea of individual election, connected with the other idea of its being founded on prescience; there having been no separation between the two, until it was accomplished by Austin.

There should be particular notice taken of the period, in which a predestination, founded on prescience, and both subjects as they relate to another life, first show their

heads, in the works of Christian writers. Clemens of Alexandria has been quoted to this effect; although, as the present writer supposes, under a mistake. There is, however, a sentiment to the same effect in Ireneus, [*Pg 68, Ed. Thirlby*] a contemporary of Clemens, in a passage which was before recited. There has been also thought something to the same effect, in a passage of Justin; which, however, does not seem to the writer of this to come under the denomination treated of;

predestination as of prescience; it will only show, that Justin brought into this department of theology somewhat of the philosophy, which he professed before his conversion to Christianity. Vossius cites even the Roman Clement to the same effect: but the work from which he brings his quotation is the *Recognitions*; now well understood to be unworthy of any credit.

If Ireneus, Clemens of Alexandria, and Tertullian, be considered as authors of the second century, there

seems no occasion to take notice of any of the third; except of Origen, among the Greeks; and of Cyprian, Arnobius, and Minutius Felix, among the Latins; what we have from others being mere fragments. And even those mentioned, are not introduced to make citations from them, for the reasons which will be here given.

There can be no use in making extracts of the little that appears to the effect, in the writings of Origen. For, although that little is directly to the purpose of a predestination founded on

affected by the other. This use, however, may be made of the name of Origen; that his writing so much, and on such a variety of matter, and yet, his saying of little or nothing on predestination, is a proof, that it was not much a subject of discussion, or of religious instruction, in his day. The fact may be easily accounted for. He lived at a time, when the scriptural use of the word had become little attended to, because the occasion of it had ceased; and when what is here considered as the more modern and

metaphysical use of it had not yet appeared; or at least, had not become familiar. Notwithstanding all the intemperate abuse of Origen after his death, succeeding to the honour in which he had been held during his life, it is here supposed, that his testimony would at all times have been held good, except where his peculiar fancies were concerned. On descending to the Latin writers, Cyprian, Arnobius, and Minutius; we find in them, to the point of predestination, absolutely nothing. This is especially

it is poison itself.” [*Vol. 1. page 315. Am. Ed.*] And yet no one can deny, that the baptismal offices are full of this supposed poison. But why was it not very dangerous in the time of Cyprian? Was it, that all baptized persons were afterwards adorned by Christian rectitude? The contrary appears, in the glowing accounts which we have of the great declension, before the beginning of the Decian persecution. Of this, Mr. Milner himself says — “The long” (preceding) “peace and prosperity had

corrupted both,” (the eastern and the western churches) “and men in the former part of this century had forgotten that a Christian life, was that of a stranger.” [*Vol. 1. page 369*] How then is it possible, that what is now poison in the church of England, should be "not very dangerous in the time of Cyprian?" But it is evident, that the ideas of baptism and regeneration, entertained by this father and by the said church, must differ from those of Mr. Milner.

That the writings referred

to have interested the western division of the empire, whatever influence it may have had in the eastern; which however, as is here believed, was not considerable. Neither is the inattention to the subject to be wondered at. There was no longer that mixture of Judaism with Christianity, which required the opposition of the national predestination of scripture. There had not arisen the heresy of the denial of the grace of God, which was conceived as calling for the absolute predestination of St. Austin. It is true, that

prevalent in the church, was begun by hereticks. There is a striking authority for this assertion in Tertullian's book — "de Prescriptionibus;" confessedly one of the ablest of his works. He ascribes all the errors of hereticks, to their being introduced into Christianity from the philosophical sects, to which the patrons of these errors were respectively addicted. An appeal thus made in the face of the world, in favor of the integrity of the church in that particular, in

“remarkable for his knowledge, reading, and ecclesiastical investigations” He indeed, adds— “Everything I have seen and read, confirms me in his partiality, credulity, and unfair representations:” but this was “wherever the interests of the party which he espoused were concerned.” By this Dr. Haweis, could not have intended anything relative to the present question; but has in view the, Arian heresy, of which he supposed Eusebius to be a favorer; although, as is subjoined, he is vindicated

from it by the learned translator of Mosheim, and it might have been still added, by many others, much higher in the estimation of the world for learning and judgment, than Dr. Haweis.

But to go on with the fathers of the fourth century: the authorities against the sense of Austin and of Calvin, are so abundant, that they have not met the resistance of the feeble attempts made by some, in relation to earlier fathers. There shall be recited a few of the authorities; not for the

purpose of supporting what has been considered the scriptural doctrine under the present point; but to show, that the predestination discoursed of in that age, although here thought an intrusion of philosophy into the dominion of the religion of the gospel, was under the view of its being founded on prescience: for although this aspect of the doctrine is here supposed to be quite different from the scriptural; yet, by keeping within view the change which the doctrine must have undergone, before it

became presented in this form, we shall best perceive the steps, by which it passed from its scriptural to its metaphysical meaning.

The succeeding quotations shall be taken, as the passages stand in Vossius's history of the Pelagian controversy, Book 6, Thesis 8th. And a few authors shall suffice, from each of the two great branches, then considered as constituting the one Christian church.

To begin with latin writers: Jerome, whose High rank in the list of

Christian writers there can be no occasion to establish, delivers himself as follows— “The heat of the sun is one, and according to the different qualities of bodies subjected to its influence, it makes some liquid and others hard; it dissolves some, and binds others; for wax is melted and clay is hardened, and yet the nature of heat is not different. So likewise is the goodness and clemency of God. The vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, that is the people of Israel, it hardens. But the vessels of mercy which he hath

believers. By which it is manifested, that the choice is not of nations, but of thew ills of men.” [*Pg. 555*] Thus writes St. Jerome, as zealous an adversary of Pelagius, as St. Austin himself; and yet, as Vossius remarks, treading in the steps of those who had gone before him, on the subject of the quotation given.

But it may be worthwhile, in consideration of the celebrity of this father, to attend to a few more extracts from his Works [*pg. 555*] He says—“According to which he

ascribed to him. If Hilary were the author, any objections of his day to his orthodoxy do not extend to the present point, on which he stands uncontradicted. And therefore fault found with him in other respects, even makes in favor of his authority in this particular. Besides, it is common to appeal to his writings, as illustrative of the doctrine of the church, at the time in which he lived.

Hilary writes thus—
“Those whom he” (God)
“foreknew as devoted to
him, them he chose to
receive the promised

have involved in it a censure oh all who had gone before him.

From Latin writers, the transition is to the Greek: and the beginning shall be with Basil, who acquired the title of “the great.” This eminent man writes as follows — *[Page 563]*

“Although the apostle says, that the vessels of wrath are fitted for destruction; let us not think, that Pharaoh was made bad. For thus, the faults would be transferred to his Maker. But, when you hear of vessels, understand that every one of us is made for some use:

as in a great house, one vessel is made of gold, another of silver, another of shell, and another of wood. Therefore, the will of every one is compared to materials of this sort. For, the golden vessel is he, who is sincere and without guile in his mind and manners. The silver vessel is he, who is a little inferior to the other in dignity and value. That of shell and of clay, who is wise to earthly things, and fit to be broken and destroyed. That of wood is he, who is easily debased by sin, and affords fuel for eternal fire. So

hardened him, aggravating the evil by long suffering; that at last, his iniquity growing to the height, the judgment of God on him might be shown to be the more just. Therefore, inflicting the plagues sparingly on him in the beginning, and increasing his hardness by little and little, he did not soften him; but found him, as a despiser of God in the beginning, so, after the punishments brought on him, bearing them by long habit. And even thus, he did not deliver him over to death, until he threw

himself headlong into it; while, trusting in the arrogancy of his heart, he dared to enter on the road of the just; and thought that the Red Sea might be passed, as by the people of God, so by him also." In this passage, there may be clearly perceived the anti-calvinistick principles, on which the case of Pharaoh is explained. His wickedness was from himself; while yet, God so ordered the course of nature; as that his own high designs should be carried into effect.

The next named shall be

of the latter. "[Page 552] In another place, the same father speaks thus of the same case of Jacob and Esau— "That it may appear, says he, the apostle, that the election was made according to foreknowledge." [Page 553] And in another, place, commenting on the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Romans, he says— "His people, whom he had before foreknown to be fit, and to be recipients of the faith." Other passages might be cited from the voluminous works

place of his death in an inhospitable country, to be buried in the capital of the empire, and in the church, in which persuasion had so Often hung upon his lips. His corpse being brought by water, and having to cross the Propontis in the way, the waves of this sea are said to have been covered by boats and vessels, filled with spectators of the procession. On its reaching of Constantinople, it was carried to the place of its deposit, in the chariot of the reigning emperor; who, attending with his sisters,

which flourished with a denial of them? And yet among calumnies the most cruel, a charge, so reasonable as this would have been on the principles supposed, is not to be met with. Not only so, when Austin, within less than a century afterwards, broached opinions in contrariety to those of Chrysostom, it does not appear, that the recent popularity of the modern doctrine had the effect of bringing the more ancient under condemnation. The reason is obvious. The former was rendered

to renounce all endeavours of this sort. Dr. Haweis, indeed, has not been so quick-sighted as Mr. Toplady, in the discovery of supposed truth, in the quarter here referred to; but has taken another course, that of denying the character of Christian, to almost all the celebrated characters of their respective ages; endeavouring to make up for the loss of Christian virtue in those who have themselves written, or who have been written of by others, by the strange charity of the supposition,

supposition that the said doctrine held so important a station as some suppose, in the scale of Christian theology, that “truth was perished from the earth;” until she arose at the call of Austin, to combat the heresy of the Pelagians.

This was indeed a very bold error, dispensing with the necessity of divine grace; which the church of God had always taught to be essential to the beginning of all good in man, and to its subsequent increase and perfection. Austin might have been sufficiently fortified against

than Origen was in another; whose memory was roughly handled, because of errors transmitted to posterity in his works. Whence this difference? It was, because all men were aware of the novelty of Austin's second thoughts. They were made current by his high reputation, and by the merited abhorrence of the opinions of his opponents; but still, under the recollection that the former were unknown, until the error of the latter brought them into notice.

But after all, the system of

Austin was not altogether that, which has since been denominated from the name of Calvin. What is called the perseverance of the saints, is in direct contradiction of the former system, and it has nothing of what has been since called the covenant of works; invented for the giving of an air of justice to the imputation of Adam's sin. Even this does not appear in so offensive a shape as in the modern doctrine: for although, according to the representation of Austin, all incur eternal damnation

the modern. For although Austin held, like those who had gone before him, that without it we can do nothing; yet he represents it as acting without violence to the will. Notwithstanding all these points of difference, the sentiments of St, Austin must be confessed to be Calvinistick, in respect to the independence of predestination on works or faith foreseen.

The author finds it proper, in this place, to state what he thinks the changes which the doctrine of predestination has

century and the beginning of the fourth: which will evidently appear to those, who shall peruse the authors within those limits, with a view to the present question.

3dly. At about the period the last mentioned, some of the most distinguished writers of the Christian church, beginning to have a reference in their writings to questions agitated among the philosophers, occasionally touch on the question which relates to freewill, as it is called. [*The Liberum Arbitrium,*” of the Latins and the “GREEK” of

doctrines of St. Austin, was that of Pope Coelestine, his cotemporary. This prelate, after the death of the other, censured some French presbyters, who had faulted his doctrine; and the French bishops, who had let such conduct pass in silence. Coelestine drew up nine articles, under the name of Aphorisms, against the opinions opposed to those of Austin; which articles relate to grace and original sin, and say nothing of predestination.

Further, Coelestine added to his articles a declaration,

in which he alluded to some deep and perplexing difficulties, which he wished to avoid. The Roman catholic historian, Du Pin, remarks, that some supposed the deep and perplexing difficulties to be the efficacy of grace and gratuitous predestination. But the said historian, although he will not affirm that these are articles of faith, is of opinion that Coelestine lays down the first of them and supposes the other, in the Aphorism; and that therefore, under the name of deep and perplexing difficulties,

there were alluded to other matters, which are specified by the historian. And besides, as he remarks, the adversaries of Austin having principally opposed him on these two points; Coelestine, whose purpose it was to confute them, could not but maintain those doctrines.

Du Pin's opinion is confirmed by the subsequent reputation of Austin, within the see of Rome; however inconsistent this may seem, with her veneration for Chrysostom, Nazianzen, and many others. And

perhaps it is not a little owing to this circumstance, that the see of Rome has not found herself at liberty, in later ages, to speak explicitly to the present point; but has generally had recourse to language, which opposing parties have construed to their respective purposes.

In the council of Trent, when, after a long course of metaphysical investigation, the decrees were at last formed, the combatants, on each side, claimed to themselves the victory. Afterwards, in the dispute between the Jansenists and

Jansenius had ill explained. To him who now writes it appears, that, in the bustle made by this business in France, each party was compelled by its situation, to attack its adversary on grounds different from those on which it conceived the merits of its cause to rest. The Jesuits, with their favorers, the papal and the regal courts, were averse to the opinions of St. Austin; but could no otherwise condemn them, than under the name of the opinions of Jansenius. On the other hand, the Jansenists, who believed the propositions

which the papal bull condemned, instead of hazarding the expedient of denying the authority of the bull, had recourse to that of disputing the correctness of the quotations. And, although this brought on the carpet a new question, whether the pope were infallible in fact as well as in faith; yet, in resisting the pretensions of the former, they were sure of support, not only from the parliament and the people, but also from that great number of the French clergy, who were zealous assertors of the liberties of

2. OF REDEMPTION.

The Question not found in a controversial Form, in the Early Fathers—Passages from them—Inadmissibility of Evasion.

IF the Fathers were anti-calvinistick, on the first point of the controversy, it may easily be presumed that they were the same, on the other four points. Accordingly, we find them such; and-that in the most decisive of all shapes, not as

Enough however is occasionally dropped, to show that such a limitation could not have been the current doctrine.

Ireneus, has been attended to, on the subject of election. Let him be heard again on the present subject; on which he speaks expressly, when he describes Christ as “made the mediator between God and men; propitiating for all, the Father, against whom we have sinned.”
[Book 5. ch. 17]

Let Clemens of Alexandria speak next. He says— “The Lord, since he

loves mankind, exhorts all to an acknowledgment of the truth.” [*In his exhortation*]

Again—Hear, you who are afar off and you who are near; the word is hid from none; the law is common; the light has shone on all men.”

[*Ibid*] Again this author, commenting on the divine offers to the wicked in sundry places of scripture, remarks, as the result—“ It clearly demonstrates both of these points, that God foreknew the future; and that his benignity, gave to freewill an opportunity of repentance.” [*Poedagogus*

decease. This learned man, [*Against Celsus, book 3*] commenting on that passage of the gospel, in which Christ invites to himself the weary and heavy laden, under the promise that he will give them rest, makes the offer coextensive with the propensity to sin; speaking thus— “Therefore all men, laboring and heavy laden on account of an inbred propensity to sin, are called by the word of God to accept of rest.”

The same Origen, speaking of Jesus, says concerning him— “Being

lifetime, and in the height of his reputation, it would have been impossible to have obtruded on the Christian world such material innovations on their system, as the above are considered to be by some.

There can be no question of the orthodoxy of Cyprian; who compares the universality of divine grace to that of the light of the sun: “For,” says he, “if this is poured on all alike, how much more does Christ, the true sun, bestow equally on all in his church the light of eternal life.” [*Ep. 76, ad*

Magnum]

Arnobius has never been supposed to have given any other than a true account of Christianity, in the contrast in which he has placed it with the religion of the Gentiles. This author, professedly answering the objection that all do not receive the benefit, although all are called, says — “The fountain of life is laid open to all; and no one is prohibited or driven away from the right of drinking.” [*Bock 11*]

Gregory of Nazianzum, so much celebrated as a model of Christian piety and

while, but of the whole world, and a never dying expiation.” [*Orat. 41*]

Cyril, of Alexandria says—
[*Ad Egyp. Monachos*]
“One, excelling all in dignity, placed his life for all:” And then he goes on to explain his sense of this universality, by making it coextensive with mortality.

The celebrated Athanasius is full of the sentiment: And it is to be hoped, that his merit in combating for the Christian faith in one department, has not been counterbalanced by his sacrificing of it in another.

against the Arian heresy; but surely no man's language was further removed from theirs than his must be seen to have been, in this treatise of his on the incarnation of the word; in another, in Exposition of the Faith; and in others of his numerous compositions.

The inconsistency of Dr. Haweis is especially conspicuous, in the instance of his character of Athanasius. The great leader of the opposition to the heresy of Arius might of course, on that account, look for some mercy at the

little evidence of a title to such a character; or at least, some slight expression of what Dr. Haweis considers as orthodoxy, on some one of the Calvinistick points. But no instance of this is produced, from any of the numerous works of Athanasius. The truth is, that no instance of it was to be found; and not this only, but that there were to be found divers contradictions of the leading points of that theory, of which there are instances in the quotations made. The overlooking of these, is a great relaxation

and a living one for the whole world.” *[Haeres. 55]*

The author of the book entitled: “Of the Call of the Gentiles,” which, although erroneously ascribed as to the authorship, is confessedly full of true Christian doctrine, Records as follows, in book 2, chapter 16, entitled “That Christ died for all — There is no reason to doubt, that Christ died for sinners, of which number he was not himself one. Did not Christ die for all? But wherefore did Christ die for all?” And afterwards— “All, whether

could not have been.”

Even Austin, before his controversy with the Pelagians, discoursing on psalm 95, speaks as follows— “The Redeemer shed his blood and purchased the world. Do you ask what he purchased? Observe what he gave, and learn from it what he purchased. The blood of Christ was the price. Of so great a price, what is the value? What but the whole world? What but all nations?”

It would be easy to swell the size of this detail to a great extent. But the author

would be abused; to give even plausibility to the distinction, it should at least appear, that the same writers have, in other passages of their works, expressed sentiments hostile to the doctrine of the universality of Christ's redemption — that the opinion should appear somewhere concerning the death of Christ, of its being designed for a limited and elect number only; and of its being over-ruled, in regard to all others, so as to make it the mean of their damnation. But it will not be said, that there have

3. OF FREEWILL.

A Caution— Sundry Fathers— The Subject as it respects Original Sin.

BEFORE we enter on this point, as it respects the fathers, it may be proper to guard against misconception. They so abound with passages ascribing all good to the grace of God, that it would be a great error to suppose them attributing anything to the will of fallen man, so as that it may be operative of good, of its own power

and virtue. All is ascribed to grace; but this, consistently with human liberty, under the operation of the same, while, without it, there is no liberty, but the will is enslaved by sin.

We have a whole host of authorities in favor of what is understood by the word freewill; whether correctly used or not; and so far as is here recollected, not a single authority to the contrary. Most of the passages quoted under the former point, apply equally to the present, and it is here thought more proper to refer to, than to repeat

them. But a few others, applying more pointedly to freewill, may be acceptable.

There has been already given from Justin, on the subject of predestination something which applies to this point also: But the following are more especially pertinent: In the first apology there is — “If man have not a power, by freewill, to avoid what is evil and to pursue what is good, no blame can attach to his actions, whatever they may be. But that it is of free choice either to live rightly or to sin, we show thus.” *[Thirlby page 64]*

and particular; there being yet maintained that free power of the will.” [*Thirlby page 356*]

Ireneus writes thus—
“They who have done good shall have glory and honour, because they have done good; when it was in their power, not to have done it. But they who do it not, shall receive the just judgment of God, because they have not done good, when they might have done it.” [*Book 4. ch. 71*]

There follow two other quotations from Ireneus.
“But since all are of the same nature, and endued

final perseverance. And yet, it does not seem to have been an object to condemn the doctrine; but the contrary to it is taken for granted. This is in consistency with what the present work maintains, of the comparatively recent origin of then opinion; and of its being utterly unknown in the ages here spoken of.

Tertullian is indeed very copious on the present subject. There shall be further given, not verbatim, but in a summary way, what he says concerning it in his 2d, book against

Marcion. He sets forth, that man was formed with freewill; and that in no one thing was the image of God more conspicuous than in this. He further says, that this property of man's condition is confirmed by the law enjoined on him; because neither a law nor a threatening of death could have been given to one, who had not in his power the obedience which the law required. So far, Tertullian stands opposed to the necessarian scheme only: But what follows, is contrary alike to that and to Calvinism proper. For he

complaint was made of him because of his fall to Montanism, there has been nothing heard of his being objected to in early times, as a denier of the free and sovereign grace of God.

Clemens of Alexandria, in his *Stromata*, writes thus — “If they do not repent, they shall be judged; some, because having it in their power, they would not exercise faith in God; and others, because having a will to that effect, they have not exerted themselves to be faithful.”

The following authorities are from St. Cyprian—

superadd the numerous concurring testimonies of the fourth. They combine to show, that in the ages of martyrs, there was professed publicly, and without reproach, and in various parts of Christendom, and by the most eminent doctors of the church, the very sentiment branded by Calvin with the accusation of arrogance, and affirmed by him to be the inspirer of that self-sufficiency, by which men are carried to destruction. Strange, that so deadly a tree should be productive of so fine a fruit!

For the establishing that Chrysostom thought as is here stated, in this particular, Calvin's complaint of him on that account, will be a sufficient testimony: but there shall be given a quotation from Nazianzen and another from Jerome. The former says— "We are required to believe in paradise, that we may enjoy its felicity: We have received a commandment, that by obeying it, we may attain to glory. Not that God is ignorant of what is to come to pass, but that he gives the sanction of his law to

but before he had written against the broachers of it. The passage is his comment on 1 John 3:3 and is as follows: "Observe, how he does not take away freewill, in saying he purifieth himself. Who purifies us, but God? But God does not purify you against your will. Therefore, because you join your will to God, you purify yourself." The discourses on St. John's gospel and epistle are supposed to have been written about the year 416. And it was in the 422d that St. Austin began to publish in the controversy.

Agreeably to the plan of the present work it will be here proper to consider the point in question, as it respects the doctrine of original sin.

The challenge may be confidently made, for the producing of a single passage from any writer for the first 400 years, giving the least countenance to the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin; in such sort, as that all mankind incurred eternal damnation on its account. The writer of this was indeed surmised, at finding the idea expressed in the

definition of original sin, in the very place in which Vossius is going on to show the consent of the fathers in that doctrine. But great was the author's surprise, at the inconsistency of this learned man; when, on examining the authorities, it appeared, that none of them go to the said point; although there are very many pertinent to the other points in his definition; which are temporal death, and the loss of original rectitude.

To search the fathers for a specifick contradiction of the comparatively modern

temporal death; and some few of them apply to a corruption of nature; while, to the purpose of eternal separation from God, there is not a sentence. As a specimen, it is proposed to give a few of his citations, and to begin with one from Justin. This father speaks, concerning the Redeemer, to the following effect—“He did not endure to be burn and to be crucified, as if he had need of these things; but he submitted to them for the sake of the human race; which, through Adam, had fallen under death and the

by a virgin, it may be released by a virgin; the virginal disobedience being balanced by virginal obedience. For, the sin of the first man being amended by the correction of the only begotten; and the wisdom of the serpent being vanquished by the simplicity of the dove; we are released from the chain, by which we had become tied to death.

Another authority of Austin, and from him taken by Vossius, is that of Origen; who says— “The malediction of Adam is common to all men; and

agreeable to the original constitution of human nature.

There is a remarkable passage in St. Austin, in which he gives an explanation of original sin, similar to that which is sustained in this work. The passage is in his discourses on the gospel of St. John, and is as follows, being a comment on chapter 3, verse 37. “He did not say, the wrath of God shall come on him; but the wrath of God remaineth on him. All who are born, have with them the wrath of God. What wrath of God? That

which the first man Adam received. For if the first man sinned and heard—Dying, thou shalt die, he became mortal, and we began to be born mortal. We were born with the wrath of God. From thence came the Son, not having sin, and as he was clothed with flesh, he was clothed with mortality. If he shared the anger of God with us, shall we be backward to share the grace of God with him? Whoever therefore will not believe in the Son, the wrath of God remaineth on him. What wrath? That of which the apostle speaks.

For we were ourselves the children of wrath, even as others. All are the children of wrath, because coming under the curse of death. ”

[Volume 9, page 29]

This was written, like the passage the last quoted from the father, after the beginning of the Pelagians, but before his publick controversy with them. It is evident, that he considered the threatening in paradise as accomplished by mortality; although doubtless, this with all its natural effects.

4. OF GRACE.

The Question stated, as it respects the Fathers— Passages from them— Of the Subject, as it regards Faith and Works.

BEFORE an entrance on this subject, as it respects the fathers, it may be proper to ascertain, in what way we may expect the matter found in them to apply to the sentiment here sustained, supposing it to be correct.

It would be in vain to search in them for direct

opposed. If it be essential, as is affirmed, to the glory of the divine sovereignty, some evidence of the belief of it, by someone living in so long a tract of time, might have been expected. Or rather; in works so full of piety and humility, abounding within that tract of time, there would have been traces of the sentiment, visible over the whole face of them.

Justin, in his dialogue with Trypho, addressing himself to that person and his companions, says—"Do you think, O man, that, we could have understood

of the Father to himself.” Again— “He” [that is Christ] “calls Peter happy, because flesh and blood had not revealed it to him, but his Father, who is in heaven; making it manifest, that to know the Son of the Almighty Father is not from the flesh, which was carried in the womb; but from the paternal power itself.”

Tertullian follows: In his book *de Anima*, he says— “To whom is the truth discovered, without God? To whom is God known, without Christ? To whom is Christ displayed, without

stationed, we perceive the tokens of the future.” And again— “Only let fear be the guardian of innocence, that the Lord, who has mercifully influenced by the falling of his heavenly indulgence on our minds, be retained by the entertainment of a mind delighting in his righteous operation.”

Origen says— “Those things, without a better inspiration and a more divine virtue cannot come into the contemplation of men. For as no man knows the things of a man but the spirit of a man which is in

Christians were under an error; having not been sufficiently attentive to the end of the law, recently revealed. Still, it seems to have been the result, not so much of arrogancy, as of the not looking beyond the letter, to the spirit of the economy under which they had lived.

By the time that the church had become deprived of the apostles, and of the men to whom there can be applied, with any propriety, the name of apostolick fathers, all ground of that dispute had been done away, by the

evident ceasing of the polity and dispersion of the nation of the Jews. Hence it happened, as might have been expected, that we hear no more of the question of the comparative efficacy of faith and works Christian preachers did indeed inculcate faith in Christ; and so they did holiness of heart and life, in every way, and neither the one nor the other to be accepted, otherwise than through grace.

When Pelagius at last appeared, with so much noise about the sufficiency of nature; Austin and

loudly to proclaim the orthodoxy of Austin, there should arise the kind of merit attributed in the same church to human works, this is not the place to inquire. It will be sufficient to remark of the ages in view, that they were between the time when the question turned on the interference of Jewish prejudice with Christian liberty, and another tract of time, when a question, like that in words and not in substance, was ingrafted on the opposition seen to exist between a merit originating in monkish superstition

5. OF PERSEVERANCE

St. Austin did not extend his System to this Point—Sundry Fathers—A Concession of Gerard Vossius—The Opinion of Calvin, not altogether consistent with present Calvinism—Result.

ON this subject Calvinism has the least to say, in regard to the appearance of it in any theological writer during the early ages. As to the few scraps of sentences in which an overweaning zeal has supposed the

doctrine to appear, they are in the fathers called apostolick and have been considered under the first point. Later supposed authorities than these, the author does not remember to have met with.

Even when Austin had invented what is now considered as the Calvinistick doctrine of predestination, he did not perceive the effect of it, in the final perseverance of the saints. This did not occur to any, until the era of the reformation; nor even in the early part of that, as may be inferred

an introduction of the baptized person to all the benefits of the Christian covenant; which were considered as sealed to them, in this initiatory ordinance of Christ's religion. To have made an entire change in the language and in the habits of thinking, then prevailing on a subject which came home to every bosom, would have seemed, in the age in question, to have been a tearing up of the foundation. The only substitute, was that which Austin thought of. This solved the difficulty for a

time; but was at last renounced, as an excrescence on the predestination scheme, which it might profitably part with.

The following are specimens of Austin's manner of expressing himself, on the present subject. In his book written expressly concerning it, he says— "Why, of two pious persons, perseverance is given to one and not given to the other, are among the more inscrutable judgments of God." As Vossius remarks, there could not have been here

father. And it is observable, that he does not give his opinion, as if it were on a controverted point. There was indeed a controversy, as to the general necessity of grace; in which the Pelagians had argued, that if this were divinely given, it would not happen, that some should fall away from justification. That some fell away, was admitted on both sides for truth. But Austin warded off the argument by saying, that all grace was given, except the grace of perseverance. And this continued, uniformly, to be the opinion of the

church into which Austin's ascendancy introduced it, until after the reformation.

The following is a remark, which Vossius makes of the fathers generally, in relation to the present subject: and the remark must seem the more worthy of notice, when it is considered as coming from a learned divine of a Calvinistick church. Speaking of the opinion opposed to the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, he says in his 6th book under thesis 12, to this effect— That they only of his day denied the

former opinion to be the common one of the fathers, who, however learned perhaps in other respects, were strangers to antiquity. And he further says of them, that they have their minds so enslaved by the opinions of others, as rather to see with their eyes, than with their own.

The same Vossius, has referred to sundry of the fathers before Austin; and noted to the purpose, passages of their works; naming Justin, Clemens of Alexandria, Cyprian, Tertullian and others. Although the author of the

by natural deductions from principles speciously introduced; and of which the first patrons could never have imagined the result. The author does not intend this remark in the way of reproach; but as a hint to the sincere inquirer, to trace the history of the opinions here controverted. For, if the scriptures be the rule of faith; whatever helps to the understanding of them may be derived from facts, which existed in the ages immediately subsequent to the time of the apostles; there can be no better disproof of any

CONCLUSION

Application of Authorities to the General Question of the Five Points— The Importance of this Branch of the Subject to Protestantism.

ALTHOUGH, in the introduction, there was given a caution against the supposition, that the fathers were to be set up, as supplying what might be imagined to have been omitted in the scriptures; yet it is here again notified, that the former are cited

The fourth point, so far as it is agreed on by both parties in the controversy, is very luminous in the authors cited, and in many more which might have been cited to the purpose. They declare, that salvation is altogether of grace, and that everything holy in man is produced in him by the operation of the Holy Spirit. But when to this there is added such an irresistible energy, as makes man wholly passive in the business of his salvation, there is no document establishing the point, that such an idea had

design; is accountable for, from what we know of human nature. It is the effect of that imperfection, which led the Jews gradually to submit to the inventions of will worship; until at last, they “made the word of God of none effect through their tradition.” And their example has been imitated in the Christian church, by similar additions to Christian faith and duty. Of these we can trace the rise and progress, accounting for them in the circumstances of intervening times; but for so sudden and so great a

which, however, interested but a small part of the church, although the permitting of the cruel treatment of him has always seemed surprising on the part of Rome; because, between his opinions and those of Austin, which she patronized, there are but slight shades of difference. After the beginning of the reformation, there came the council of Trent. It is impossible, but that the learned of this body must have perceived the inconsistency between the doctrine of Chrysostom and

metaphysical war after the decision of the council; each side contending, that it was in their favor. In the 17th century, Jansenism became in France, what Calvinism was in England. On each side of the question, different bishops took different sides. And yet, in the breasts of these bishops were the sources of traditional truth, from whence there was to have issued an authoritative declaration of it, had any council been called for such a purpose. The whole thread of the history of this controversy, is unfavorable

another.

The period referred to, is the time of the decrees of the council of Sardica, which extended the jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome, as it did also the jurisdictions of three other bishops, beyond their respective provincial limits.

Let there then be due stress laid, not only on what the fathers testify; but on the effect of their testimony, in ascertaining the states of opinion in times before them. St. Paul gives the instruction to a Christian bishop — “The things that thou hast heard

of me, among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." [2 Tim. 2:2]

And St. Peter says — "I will endeavour that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance." [2 Tim. 1:15] No doubt, the care which they and other apostles exercised to transmit the faith entire, must have had some extraordinary effect on times succeeding. If anyone ask — On what principle is the degree of it to be

estimated? The answer is —
By what is known of human
nature and the laws which
govern it, in all similar
circumstances of
importance. That
perpetuity is not to be
expected, there is abundant
evidence in every line, to
which the principle may be
applied. On this account,
there is reason to rejoice,
that God has vouchsafed to
give a more permanent rule
in the scriptures; which,
agreeably to this his design,
have been preserved in
such integrity under the
operation of his
providence, that

were more remote from it.

The author, in the conclusion of these remarks, has his mind impressed by that passage of scripture, in which, on the opening of the fifth seal, there were displayed, in prophetick vision, under the altar— “The souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:” [*Rev. 6:9*] Words designed to apply to the martyrs, during the early persecutions. And the question forced itself on his mind — Is it possible, that these holy men should have

been commended as "faithful unto the death," without a correct apprehension of the saving truths of the profession for which they suffered? This must have been their condition, if what is now called Calvinism be of the essence of divine truth. For, of election and reprobation, as exhibited by that theory; of the imputation of the sin of Adam; of a natural inclination in all men to all manner of wickedness; of an irresistible grace; and of the impossibility of falling from it finally; there is not a record to show, that they

AN APPENDIX: Containing an Argument against Calvinism from some Circumstances attending the Introduction of it into the Church.

Design— Late Introduction
of the Theory of St.
Austin— Its Contrariety to
the precedent Faith of the
Church— He at first agreed
with the early Fathers— His
Innovation offended
many— It appeared in a
mis-shapen Form—
Opposite Positions of this
Father — He never
censured as essentially

erroneous, the Opinions which he had abandoned—A Circumstance, showing his Propensity to needless Speculation—Inference.

IN this third part of the present work, there have been occasionally remarks, tending to the point to be here maintained; yet directed, severally, to the more restricted purposes, for the sake of which they were made. It has therefore been judged to have a tendency to the object of the whole, to embody the remarks into an argument against the Calvinistick

system generally. The argument will relate to those innovations made in theology, in the beginning of the fifth century, which have all along been held out, as the substance of the Calvinistick theory.

But there is another reason, in thus bringing into view the remarks which have been made on the changes introduced by Austin. It is, that there is thought a use in setting down from this father, some passages on one side, and some on the other, of the controversy; in order to give strength to the

argument, intended to be drawn from the change which took place in himself, and in a very great proportion of the Christian world.

The first matter to be noticed, is the introduction of the system at so late a period; and then, principally owing to the combination of the influence of a single doctor of the church, with circumstances favorable to the effect which followed. Exclusively of the question—How far the theory is taught in the scriptures, which is the

estimation of all Christendom, the most abounded with shining examples of every Christian grace, and in which the church was the most plentifully watered with the blood of martyrdom, seems one of the last positions, which the known principles of human nature should permit us to believe. The sentiment has been sufficiently unfolded in the body of the work, and is now introduced, only for the assemblage in which it is to be exhibited.

The second particular to be named, is the opposition

current doctrine was a salvation founded on the sovereignty of God, operating in the election of some and the utter reprobation of others, without regard to faith and works foreseen of them respectively. Or, if the former doctrine had crept into any particular church and prevailed there for a time; it may be presumed, that the error, when detected, would have destroyed all credit to the men, by whom it had been either introduced or patronized. But, neither of these was the effect in the

present instance. Is it not evident, that when the new theory showed her face, with a diffidence and a toleration so ill-suited to her subjects, it must have been from a consciousness of her novelty?

3rdly; it has been shown, that St. Austin himself agreed in principle with the fathers who had gone before him, until he changed his mind during the progress of the Pelagian controversy. Were such a change to be affirmed, concerning any distinguished character of a Calvinistick church at the

grace of God, which was now the matter at issue, but had not entered into the former controversy, This seems a sufficient answer, so far as the Pelagians were concerned. But in the controversy between the Calvinists and the Arminians; the latter, who are as far as the other from denying the grace of God, may remark, that in doing this, he has adopted the very language which they use in contradiction to their opponents; and that it must be true in regard to them, if it be truly held up against the others. There seems

less weight in another ground of defence, which Austin has taken in his retractations. The plea now alluded to is, that the liberty which he defended was predicated of man in his first estate, and not in his fall. This is contradicted by the whole thread of the argument, in the three books on freewill. The argument is carried on in the form of a dialogue, which connects the question with the practical subject of human conduct, in the present life. The matters here affirmed will appear in extracts from

these books, intended to be subjoined. 4thly; Another circumstance marking the novelty of St. Austin's doctrine, is the surprise which it occasioned, and the opposition which it met with from persons of high respectability in the church, who, however, did not fall under the charge of heresy, or under any judicial censure on that account.

Considering the popularity attaching to the writings of the ablest defender of the faith against the Pelagians; and further, the great authority

authority of Celestine and that of Austin, shall not be here ascribed to the motive attributed to them by the infidel Voltaire; who, in his Treatise on Toleration, after describing the former as a merciless tyrant, says—

“He” (Austin) “truckled to the bishop of Rome, only for the sake of playing the tyrant in Africa.” Of these two men it is here conceived, that, instead of being partners in iniquity, they were very pious and virtuous persons, who were sincere in maintaining what they conceived to be the truth; but whose zeal in

the propagation of it was considerably damped, by the opposition in which it stood to the hitherto prevailing doctrines of the church. A similar application might be made of an event which took place in the monastery of Adrumetum; occasioning a correspondence of their abbot with St. Austin.

There is a remarkable fact, relative to one of the French clergy, to whom the opposition in Marseilles is ascribed. The person meant is Cassian, who was in the highest reputation, both as a writer, and as a man of a

very holy life and conversation. He was a contemporary of Austin. The works of Cassian are said to have been full of good sense and piety. Although they are known to have contained many things in opposition to the sentiments of St. Austin, on the subjects of predestination and freewill; yet, in defiance of the popularity of the latter, and the countenance afforded to them by the papacy, the other work continued to be admired and much read, in monasteries and elsewhere,” having

something “so powerful and divine”— thus Du Pin quotes from Photius— “that the monasteries which observed that rule made themselves eminent for their singular virtues;” “and besides”— continues Photius— “there are none, in my judgment, that are more useful, spiritual, and tend more to piety and true devotion.” Certain it is, that the dominant authority of the times was obliged to yield to diversity of opinion in this instance, on subjects concerning which it had positively decided. It was not congenial with the

absurdity of praying for the salvation of sinners, on any other supposition than that of a grace preventing or going before any salutary motions of their wills. The only way of accounting for the opposite error in such persons, is the little discussion which the subject had undergone, until brought under minute examination by the controversy excited by Pelagius. St. Austin himself stands in need of this apology; since he acknowledges, that before the said period, he had not admitted what he at last

of St. Austin.

5thly. There is no small evidence of the new invention of the theory in the beginning of the fifth century, in its then appearing in such a misshapen form, as required to be better modelled by Calvin and those who followed him. What is here especially alluded to, is there being suffered to prevail the hitherto received opinion, that there may be a final fall from grace. "The perseverance of the saints" was a doctrine not conceived of in the days of

being contemplated in the person of their progenitor, and their being affected by the act of him as their representative; their inheriting of his depraved nature, seemed sufficient for the purpose, in the age referred to. But there was afterwards thought an advantage gained, from the circumstance of the representative's offending against a known law. How far the constituting of such a representation is a credible hypothesis, is another question. It is satisfactory to those by whom it is affirmed; but

Austin seems to have been a stranger to it.

The imperfection of the system of Calvinism, as left by St. Austin, may especially appear from the following concession in the late work of Mr. Milner—“From the review of the Pelagian controversy, the attentive reader will see, that the article of justification must be involved in Augustine’s divinity, and doubtless it savingly flourished in his heart, and in the hearts of many of his followers; yet the precise and accurate nature of the doctrine itself

professes to have taken the above, from "The Theological Miscellany for September, 1785." another Calvinistick work of celebrity.

The writer of this proposed, in the beginning, to exhibit to the eye some instances of the contrariety in the sentiments of St. Austin himself, before and after he became engaged in his conflict with the Pelagians. But it will be proper to note the points, to which the quotations will apply. With the fifth point of the controversy — perseverance — there will

be no need to meddle; because the ancient faith, as to that particular, continued to be maintained. They who impugned his doctrine perceived and maintained, as an objection to the new theory, that the ancient was contradicted by it. Doubtless, this was a consequence fairly drawn. The present writer entertains the opinion, that Austin perceived the tendency of his theory to be hostile to the doctrine of universal redemption, descended to him along the stream of antiquity; and to

could ever have conceived the contrary to what this text affirms, in any sense in which it can be taken. But the sense in the place in which it stands, is really no more than what relates to the possession of such gifts, as ordinarily create a rivalry. The sentiment is substantially the same with what the very heathen acknowledged; of which there is a specimen in Homer, in what Agamemnon says of Achilles, without any subtle distinctions concerning divine grace and human liberty— “Know, that the

ever existing gods have made you warlike;" involving the acknowledgment, that every gift is from a higher power: however the proper cultivation of it may require the putting forth of human energy, which was equally given from on high.

But, without going further into the sufficiency of Austin's reasons for his change; the fact is confessed, that the change was made: a change from a theory of religion, which is thought to rob God of his sovereignty; to another, which is thought to ascribe

to him all his glory. Now, it is contended here, that there are no evidences in Austin's works, of that penitence and that sensibility to divine grace, as it respected the being rescued from error, which would be thought exacted at the present day, by a similar illumination of divine truth.

The writer of this supposes, that it will be not improper, but in agreement with the general design of the work, to note a circumstance in the character of this celebrated father, accounting for what

are here considered as his needless speculations in theology. The circumstance is, the fondness for speculations of that description, which he seems to have brought with him from philosophy; as will appear from the passage to be here translated from the first of his three books on freewill. The work is in the form of a dialogue: and when Evodius, who bears the other part in it, had asked concerning the origin of evil, Austin answers—"You propose the question, which exercised me

be added, that a great proportion of his voluminous works are a comment on the confession. Do the scriptures, in any place, impose an obligation on Christians, to perplex themselves with the inquiry, which so exceedingly harassed the father in early life?

It will not be pretended that they do. Accordingly the next inquiry is — Whether it be not at least probable, that the refined reasonings, introduced by him, as little concern the ordinary Christian, as does

the constitutional character which led to them.

The writer of this, having cited the preceding passage, thinks it may be of use to remark a sentiment in it, which, although not disowned in the retractations of the father, is certainly in hostility with his anti-pelagian armour. It is the connexion recognised between his original sincerity, and his attaining at last, through divine aid, to freedom of inquiry. The sentiment is precisely the same with that of St. Paul — "obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly,

ought to be the less, because of his not having felt the weight of his error, if it were indeed one; the conclusion is, that, these particulars combine in disproving the theory, and of course Calvinism; which is confessedly the same in substance, although rendered more consistent and complete.

END OF VOLUME 1